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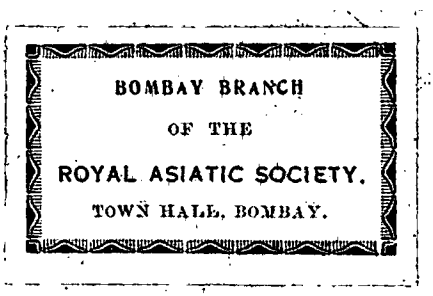

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THE

BYRTH, LYF, AND ACTES

OF

KYNG ARTHUR;

OF HIS NOBLE KNYGHTES OF THE ROUNDE TABLE,

THEYR MERVEYLLOUS ENQUESTES AND ADUENTURES,

Thachyeuyng of the Sanc Greal;

AND IN THE END

LE MORTE DARTHUR,

WITH THE DOLOUROUS DETH AND DEPARTYNG OUT OF THYS WORLDE OF THEM AL.

WITH AN

INTRODUCTION AND NOTES,

BY ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

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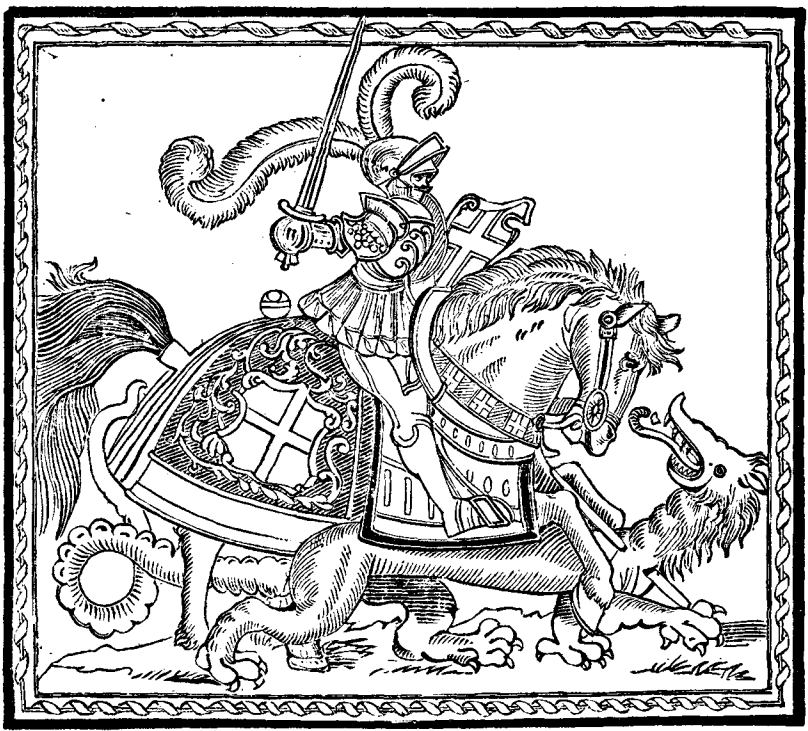
VOL. I.



LONDON:

Printed from Caxton's Edition, 1485,

FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

BY THOMAS DAVISON, WHITEFRIARS.

1817.

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PREFACE.

ICH as the English is in every other branch of literature, it is peculiarly deficient in prose romances of chivalry, a species of composition in which the Portugueze and the French have excelled all other nations. The cause of this deficiency may perhaps be found in our history. At a time when the feelings and fashion of the age tended to produce and encourage such works, and when the master-pieces in this kind were composed, our language had not found its way among the higher classes, and our prose-style in consequence was wholly unformed. We had metrical romances in abundance, because these were in the proper sense of the word popular; they were designed for recital, and all who had ears to hear were fit audience. But for long compositions in prose readers were required, and in those ages reading was a rare accomplishment even in the highest ranks: this is one reason, among others, why poetry has in all countries preceded prose; and in this country French was at that time the language of those for whom books were written. Just as the English tongue acquired a decided prevalence, and had been stampt for immortality by Chaucer, the civil wars began, and the men, without

whose patronage literature could make no progress, were engaged in a fierce struggle, not merely for power, but for life. When the long contest between the houses of York and Lancaster was terminated, and the government assumed a settled form under the Tudors, the glory of chivalry was on the wane. The character of war had been changed by the general use of gunpowder; this produced, though somewhat more slowly, a change in its costume; and the intellectual activity of the age was at the same time excited and almost engrossed by the momentous struggle for religious liberty.

II. For the same reasons that during the golden age of chivalry no original compositions of this description were produced among us, no translations were made from the numerous works which had appeared in French. To this circumstance the Morte Arthur is owing: it is a compilation from some of the most esteemed romances of the Round Table. Had the volumes from which it is compiled existed in English, Sir Thomas Malory would not have thought of extracting parts from them, and blending them into one work. This was done at the best possible time: a generation earlier, the language would have retained too much of its Teutonic form; a generation later, and the task of translation would have devolved into the hands of men who performed it as a trade, and equally debased the work which they interpreted, and the language in which they wrote.

III. Much has been written concerning the origin of Romance, as if one nation must necessarily have borrowed its fictions from another. But, in reality, mythological and romantic tales are current among all savages of whom we have any full account: for man has his intellectual as well as his bodily appetites, and these things are the food of his imagination and his faith. They are found wherever there is language and discourse of reason, in other words, wherever there is man. And in similar stages of civilization, or states of

society, the fictions of different people will bear a corresponding resemblance, notwithstanding the difference of time and scene. Thus the adventures of Jason and of Theseus differ more from the stories of Knight Errantry in the inferior tone of their morals, than in the character of the incidents themselves; the labours of Hercules are for the most part such as might have been achieved by one of the Twelve Peers, or of the Round Table; some of the Arabian Tales bear the strongest features of chivalrous romance; Rustan might break a spear with Esplandian; and the tale which Herodotus relates of the King of Egypt's treasury and the thieves, might have been found in the Thousand and One Nights, or in the Decameron.

There are indeed particular resemblances which must undeniably be referred to a common origin. Such, for instance, is the main incident in the story of the Stealing of the Veils, which the German Musæus has given us as a popular tale in his own country, which appears in Mr. Scott's Supplement to the Arabian Nights' Entertainments, and which Ali Bey, the Spaniard, found as a believed superstition at Fez. Such in the Welsh Hanes Taliesin is the pursuit of Gwion the Little by Ceridwen, which is so like an incident in the Arabian story of the second Calender, that either the one must have been derived from the other, or both (as is most probable) from some unknown source. Such, too, is the tale of a descent into the sea in a house of glass, which is found in Eastern, in Spanish, in Teutonic, and in Cymric romance. Many other such resemblances might be traced, especially in comic stories, and even in popular jests, which found their way from one part of the world to another when there was no intercourse either of war or traffic between the east and west. In what manner then may this intellectual intercourse be explained? Most probably by the dispersion of the Jews. When there were no other travellers, the Jews found no difficulty in travelling every where, because they had countrymen established in every part of the civilized or semi-barbarous world. When the European sovereigns

first became desirous of opening a trade with India, it was found that their Jewish subjects knew the way. The science of medicine was in their hands; they brought spices and drugs from the east; and perhaps the physician as well as the barber, who was then an inferior member of the same profession, found it desirable to add the art of story-telling to his other accomplishments.

IV. The favourite subjects of Grecian fiction were the Argonautic Expedition, the War of Thebes, and the War of Troy. There was some historical foundation for each of these stories, and upon this foundation a great superstructure of fable was erected. These topics satisfied the Greeks and Romans, so that their epic and dramatic writers contented themselves with drawing from these approved sources. Although we are now weary of such mythological subjects, still it must be acknowledged that there are some not inconsiderable advantages in taking up a popular fable, according to the advice of Horace, and the practice of so many ages. It is especially perceived in dramatic composition: all difficulty of opening the subject, and ushering the different personages of the piece to notice, or, as Mr. Bayes has it, of *insinuating the plot*, is obviated: the audience come to the representation possessed of that previous knowledge which enables them to take a lively interest from the first scene, and perhaps to derive greater pleasure from watching the developement of a well-known story, and observing the skill with which new situations have been invented, new thoughts produced, and new feelings called forth, than from a play of whose constituent parts they should be wholly ignorant: in this case some time elapses before they understand it sufficiently to be interested at all, and then the interest of curiosity becomes the predominant feeling, which it ought not to be. For this reason, rather than for any lack of invention, poets kept to the beaten track as long as classical literature existed. And here one of those resemblances is to be observed, which similar causes have produced

in different ages, and among different people. What the Theban and the Trojan wars were to the ancient writers, the histories of Charlemagne and Arthur were to the poets and romancers of the middle ages.

V. A gratuitous assertion has been hazarded by M. de Caylus, that the fables of the Round Table were invented by a jealous spirit of national rivalry, in imitation of those of Charlemagne. "The English," says he, "would not yield to us in heroical fictions: they opposed one of their heroes to ours, and a British to a French chivalry. Things went even farther than this. The French pretended to derive their origin from Francus and from Hector: the English chose to be descended from Brutus, son of Ascanius, (of Silvius he should have said), and grandson of Æneas. The pretended history of Jeffery of Monmouth established this filiation. Thus with regard to antiquity things became equal between us; and the choice which they made of Arthur for their hero in the middle ages, gave them the advantage over us of about two centuries in priority, so that the reign of Charlemagne became but a copy of his. Yet as the fabulous history of Charlemagne is the eldest, the imitation in the others is ill disguised. Arthur and Charlemagne have each a nephew of great prowess, whom they love above all other men; Roland and Gawain play the same part. No person is ignorant of the numerous wars which Charlemagne had to support; Arthur, being as great a warrior, was engaged in twelve. Both fought with the Pagans; both fought with the Saxons; both made a great many journeys; each was equally generous in distributing his spoils among his chiefs. Charlemagne was sober, his table was frugal: he only admitted his friends and the chief persons of his kingdom to it on solemn festivals. Arthur observed exactly the same conduct. The twelve peers of the one correspond to the twelve knights of the other's Round Table. Thus then it is highly probable that the whole history of Arthur has

been formed upon that of Charlemagne, and that the reign of this latter prince has been the source of all the romantic ideas which were so prolific in the succeeding ages."

This is written neither with accuracy, nor with judgement. The resemblances which are indicated are like those between Monmouth and Macedon; Charlemagne was a king, and so was Arthur, and they each had a nephew, but wherein the resemblance lies in the two kings, except in their sovereignty, or between Gawain and Roland, except in their relationship to the respective monarchs, it requires the aid of an hypothesis to discover. In reality, there existed no such rivalry, as the hypothesis premises, between the two nations at that time; that rivalry had not yet begun, nor does national rivalry display itself in such things. It can scarcely be necessary to observe, that this is no question of national literature. The books of the Round Table, whether written by Normans, Bretons, or natives of any other province, belong equally to France; they are the pride of French literature; nor have we any thing which can be placed in competition with them.

VI. M. Ginguené assigns to the Romances of the Paladines a great superiority over those of the Round Table. "It cannot be denied," he says, "that the Twelve Peers of Charlemagne, armed to deliver France and Europe from the tyranny of the Saracens, are more interesting than the Knights of Arthur seeking the St. Greall, encountering, in obtaining it, the most perilous adventures, and finishing by turning monks or hermits. It is true, that if the labours of the Knights of the Round Table and those of the Twelve Peers have little similarity in their object, the knights of the two orders resemble each other greatly in their valour, their gallantry, and their exploits; and that the first authors of these romances have almost equally introduced the wonders of fairy machinery, and the interest of love-episodes. But the fable of Charlemagne must have attracted

the imagination of the Italians much more powerfully than that of Arthur, since, knowing them both in old translations, they employed themselves upon Charlemagne and Roland, long before they took up Lancelot, Gyron the Courteous, and some other heroes of the Round Table. Roland, and the other Paladines, became national, or at least popular, in Italy as much as they were in France itself; and when at last he was celebrated by the great Ariosto,—when the Homer of Ferrara had united to all the charms of romantic fiction the nobleness and the splendour of the epic trumpet, the name of Roland had nothing then for which to envy that of Achilles."

Undoubtedly it is true that no poem of any lasting popularity has been produced upon a Round Table story; and that in its kind the Orlando Furioso will hardly be equalled, and cannot be surpassed. But the cause why Charlemagne and his Peerage should be more popular in the south of Europe than King Arthur is obvious: it is owing to the historical and local celebrity of the founder of the Western Empire; to the notoriety of his existence, and the importance of his reign,—not to any greater charm in the fictions which were engrafted upon it.

VII. "As to Arthur," says Milton, "more renowned in songs and romances than in true stories, who he was, and whether ever any such reigned in Britain, hath been doubted heretofore, and may again with good reason. No less is in doubt who was his father,—and as we doubted of his parentage, so may we also of his puissance. Considering all things," he adds, "there will remain neither place nor circumstance in story which may administer any likelihood of those great acts that are ascribed him."—His own countrymen go farther in their scepticism. Mr. Owen says, there ought not to be any doubt that there was a prince of this name, for he is mentioned by Llywarc, Merddin, and Taliesin, who were his contemporaries, and he is recorded in the Triads: but the Arthur of romance, according to

him, is a mythological person. "Arthur," he says, "is the Great Bear, as the epithet literally implies: (it is odd that he did not think of Arctos and Arcturus to strengthen his hypothesis): and perhaps this constellation, being so near the pole, and visibly describing a circle in a small space, is the origin of the famous Round Table. Telyn Arthur, or the Harp of Arthur, is also the British appellation for the beautiful constellation Lyra. Uthyr Bendragon, or *Wonder the Supreme Leader*, and Eigyr, or *Generating Power*, were the parents of the mythological, not the real Arthur, who was the son of Meirig ab Tewdrig. In some of the Welsh stories concerning him we recognize adventures which must have had a common origin with those of Hercules, and with the Argonautic voyage. It may not be amiss," he adds, "to glance into the gloomy region where the Arthur of mythology is concealed, so as to catch in his features an identity with some celebrated name recorded in the history of the primitive world. In so doing, are we mistaken or not, in recognizing him as Nimrod, the mighty hunter before the Lord, the presumptuous Belus? We can see but indistinctly here, and therefore may have erred: may others prove more fortunate."

Mr. Davies, who is certainly far the most able writer that has yet attempted to explore the dark region of Welsh antiquity, concurs in all this, except in identifying Arthur with Nimrod. He will have him "only another representation of the polyonymous patriarch—the deified Noah;" and the monuments which bear his name in so many parts of the island, he supposes to be remnants of Arkite worship. Mr. Davies is often elaborately fanciful in his explanations, and sees every thing through the haze of theory; but his volumes contain a great deal of valuable research, his views are clear and consistent, and his inferences are frequently acute, and sometimes convincing. He has proved satisfactorily that the Welsh bards adhered to the Druidical superstition long after the establishment of Christianity; and he has adduced strong grounds, at least, for supposing that the Arthur

of history was initiated in the same faith. But with regard to any mythological personage from whom the real Arthur derived his name, and the romantic one many of his adventures, farther evidence must be required. Whether the Mabinogion will supply it I am very doubtful. The specimens which I have seen lead me to no such conclusion; they are, however, exceedingly curious, nor is there a greater desideratum in British literature than an edition of these tales, with a literal version, and such comments as Mr. Davies, of all men, is best qualified to give. Certain it is that many of the Round Table fictions originated in Wales, or in Bretagne, and probably might still be traced there.

VIII. All which can be gleaned from Welsh authorities, respecting the real actions of Arthur, may be found in Mr. Turner's elaborate and most valuable history of the Anglo-Saxons: it is sufficient to prove that he made a brave stand against the Saxons, though not always a successful one, and that he was sometimes engaged in destructive wars with the petty princes of his own country. To trace the fictions to which he has given birth, would be a work of extraordinary labour and difficulty,—greater, perhaps, than any individual could accomplish. Many of the oldest works have never been published, and some, perhaps, are no longer in existence. The printed romances are of extreme rarity, and their bulk is such that they cannot be perused without a serious expence of time, more than commensurate with the importance of the object. Such, however, as I have been able to obtain, I have gone through, and among them are the most important of those from which the Morte Arthur has been compiled.

IX. Merlin is the first of these in order. I am indebted to Mr. Laing for the use of a copy in his rich collection, in two volumes, foolscap quarto, with a third, containing the Prophecies.

Sensuyt le premier volume de Merlin. Qui est le premier livre de la Table ronde. Avec plusieurs choses moult recreative. Nouvellement imprime a Paris en la grant Rue sainct Jacques a Lenseigne de la Roze blanche Couronnee.

This romance begins with a bold fiction bordering upon impiety, though assuredly it was not invented with any irreligious intention. The author pretends that the Devils held a council in consequence of the diminution which their power on earth had sustained since the Incarnation: the result of their deliberations was, a resolution that the best way to oppose the power of God in the world, would be to produce an incarnation of the Devil. A fiend accordingly volunteered for this service; but by a strange mistake, for one of his subtlety, he chose a religious damsel for the subject of the experiment; and she, by her prayers and penitence, sanctified the child, of which she had innocently and unwittingly conceived. As soon as young Merlin had saved his mother from the punishment to which she was condemned, he desired her confessor, the holy man Blaise, to write down his history, and whatever else he should tell him; upon which Blaise adjured him in the most solemn manner not to deceive him, or make him do any thing but what would please God. Merlin satisfies him upon this score, and tells him that all people will gladly hear his book, but that it will not be of authority, inasmuch as he is not one of the Apostles. Blaise is thus made Historiographer to the great Prophet and Enchanter, who with becoming regard to the information of posterity, supplies him from time to time with the most unquestionable materials. As soon as any thing remarkable has happened, away posts Merlin to Northumberland, and communicates it to his veracious chronicler.

The style of fiction with which this romance begins might induce an expectation of something better than what follows; but, in reality, it is one of the poorest books of the Round Table. There is the history of Arthur's birth, and the wars of his father Uther. Uther and

Pendragon are made two persons in this book, brothers; and Pendragon is slain in a battle upon Salisbury plain, where the river Thames flows by the city of Salisbury. This battle was fought against the Saxons, who were Saracens, and made strong war in those days upon Britain, under their Kings Hardagabran, Pignorez, Magloras, and Gaudoufles: the daughter of the Saxon Hangius had converted Vertigiers to the Law *Mahom*, and was the first person who called thē people *garçons*. After the death of Uther, the kings who had done homage to him refuse to acknowledge Arthur, notwithstanding a miracle has designated him to be their lawful sovereign. This occasions a series of tiresome wars, till the Saxons return and give these princes sufficient business at home. Merlin then sends for King Ban of Benoic, and King Boors of Gennes, to go with Arthur, and assist King Leodagan against the Irish King Ryon, famous for his mantle made of kings' beards. While he is busy in successfully terminating this war, the Saxons lay his own kingdom waste; but it is defended by some half-score of his nephews, with Gawain at their head, who have luckily all left home with one accord for the sake of receiving knighthood from their uncle's hands. Meantime King Claudas, the old enemy of King Ban and his brother Boors, had applied for aid to Julius Cæsar, Emperor of Rome. *Mais ce nestoit pas ce Julius Cæsar que le chevalier Mars occist en son pavillion au royaume de Perse, mais fut celuy que messire Gauvain occist en la battaille dessoubz Langres pour ce que celuy Julius avoit deffie le roy Artus.* The one Julius Cæsar has evidently been mistaken for Julian; as for the other, it may well be supposed that the aid of Arthur and all his chivalry was required against so formidable a personage.

Le second volume de Merlin.

On les vent a Regnes chiez Jehan Mace, a Caen chiez Michel Angier, a Rouen chiez Richard Mace aux cinq chapeletz pres la grant eglise. This Richard Mace was the printer.

Here we have the war against Claudas and the Emperor of

Rome, in behalf of King Ban and King Boors; the marriage of Arthur with King Leodagan's legitimate daughter Guenever; the reconciliation between Arthur and his brother-in-law King Lott; the destruction of the Saxons; another war against that cruel shaver King Ryon of Ireland, who is now slain by Arthur; the defeat of the Romans, with the death of their Emperor Julius Cæsar; and, finally, Merlin's disappearance, being the fatal termination of his amours with the nymph Vivian. The first books of the Morte Arthur draw largely from this romance, which has evidently been derived from the same original as the metrical romance analysed by Mr. Ellis.

X. As the Prophecies of Merlin are usually sought for to accompany the Romance, it may be proper to notice them here. The title and colophon are as follow:

Les Prophecies de Merlin. On les vent a Regnes chiez Jehan Mace, a Caen chiez Michel Angier, a Rouen chiez Richard Mace, aux cinq chapeletz pres la grant eglise.

Cy finent les propheties de Merlin, nouvellement imprimées a Rouen, pour Jehan Mace, demourant a Regnes pres Sainct Sauveur a lymage Sainct Jehan levangeliste. Et pour Michel Angier demourant a Caen pres le pont Sainct Pierre, et pour Richard Mace demourant a Rouen jouxte le portail aux libraires a lenseigne des cinq chapeletz.

This book is put together in extraordinary confusion. It seems almost as if the chapters had been written separately, and printed according to the accidental arrangement in which they were found. There is not the slightest resemblance to the predictions recorded by Jeffery of Monmouth,—the present strange compilation is much more amusing, and much more curious. Merlin, like Frey Luys d'Escobar, answers all questions respecting this world and the next; points of natural history as well as of theology and prophecy are introduced;

and occasional fragments of romance, including a considerable part of Merlin's own history, by no means according with the account given by the holy Blaise his chronicler, make up the odd medley. In one place it is said, *celuy compte est translate de Latin en François*;—in another, *le compte dit et si le grant livre le tesmoigne*; and these expressions seem not to be a mere form of fiction, but real references to an earlier work. It has evidently been written at very different times, and, of course, with very different purposes in the persons who availed themselves of Merlin's name to give their own opinions currency, or answer their own ends,—a fraud which was frequently practised in the middle ages. Many parts have a political bearing, which is now no longer explicable, unless the occasion for which they were composed could be ascertained. Many other places touch upon the corruption of the church, and the venality of the clergy: Merlin says, *noster Seigneur Jhesu Crist souffrit que je nasquisse au siecle, pour la honte des ennemys denfer, mesmement pour compter au siecle le mauvais miracle du Dragon de Babilone, que nul saint nen a parle fors seullement monseigneur saint Jehan.* p. 54. There are frequent allusions of this kind, in the spirit of an enemy to the Romish church; and yet in other places the Albigenses seem to be alluded to as a race worse than the Saracens.

According to this book Master Tholomer was the first person whom Merlin employed to write his predictions; and when he was made a bishop, and it was no longer fitting that he should be thus engaged, one of his clerks, by name Master Anthoine, succeeded to the office of Propheciographer. This personage had a most profound respect for Merlin. *Je voy clerement, dist Maistre Anthoine, que tu es le plus subtil homme qui oncques fut au siecle, si ne fut nostre seigneur Jhesu Crist.* p. 49. A third great reporter was Meliadus, brother of Sir Tristram; he was the paramour of the Lady of the Lake, and used to converse with Merlin in his tomb. The Sage Clerk Raymon was also a writer of these Prophecies. He was a very remarkable personage, who travelled through the air, over land and

sea, upon a huge stone, having a devil in its centre, like the kernel of a nut. This devil was the unlucky fiend who had Merlin for his son; and it is to his credit that he speaks well of a son so unlike himself and all his father's family: The Son of Mary, he says, permitted Merlin to be born of that strange generation in order to deceive Lucifer and those of his council: "and know," he continues, "that if luxury had not overtaken him, neither Peter, nor Paul, nor James, nor any other of the Apostles, would have done so much good as he would have done in the world. Nevertheless, so much he did, that I know of a certainty he is not damned, but is out of the power of Lucifer." The Sage Clerk Raymon of Wales was succeeded in his office by Rubers the Chaplain.

XI. A much larger portion of the Morte Arthur is taken from Lancelot du Lac than from Merlin.

Le Roman du vaillant Lancelot du Lac, Chevalier de la Table Ronde; translaté du latin en françoise, par Robert de Borron, ou de Bourron. Paris, Verard, 1494. 3 *Vol. in fol. gotiq.*

Cy fine le dernier volume de la table ronde faisant mention des fais et proesses de moseigneur Lancelot du Lac, etc. imprime a Paris ce derrenier iour dapuril mil cccc quatre vingtz et quatorze pour Anthoine Verard. 3 *Vol. in f. goth.*

This is the bulkiest of all the Round Table Romances, but it is also one of the best; and the hero might be considered as the ideal of a perfect Knight for honour, generosity, and constancy, as well as courage, if it could be forgotten that he lives in adultery with the wife of the King whom he serves, and who regards him as one of the best and most faithful of his court. The lamentation over Sir Lancelot's dead body, toward the close of the Morte Arthur, which has often been quoted for its beauty, is translated from this Romance.

XII. Sir Thomas Malory has also drawn liberally from the following romance.

Histoire du tres-vaillant, noble et excellent chevalier Tristan, fils du Roi Méliadus de Léonnois (rédigée par Luce, chevalier, seigneur du château de Gast.)—Imprimé à Paris pour Anthoine Verard. 2 tom. en 1 Vol. in fol. goth. (sans date.)

Cy finist le seconde & le dernier volume fait & cōpile en l'honneur & memoire du tres vaillāt noble et excellent chevalier Tristan fils du noble roy meliadus de leonoys. Imprime a Paris pour Anthoine Verard libraire demourant pres le pont nostre dame a lenseigne Saint jehan levangeliste ou au palais au premier pillier deuant la chappelle ou on chante la messe de messeigneurs de parlement.

The history of this romance has been investigated by Mr. Walter Scott, in his edition of Thomas of Ercildoune's poem, with his usual ability and erudition, leaving nothing undone. That it is originally British appears certain. Mr. Davies, indeed, endeavours to show that the story is allegorical mythology, and Tristram himself (or Trystan, according to the Cymric orthography of the name) a mythological character,—but this is the utmost wildness of hypothesis.

I began the perusal of this, as being the most celebrated of all these romances, with great expectations; those expectations were not answered: the story in its progress not only disappointed, but frequently disgusted me. Vile as the thought is of producing by a philtre that love upon which the whole history turns, and making the hero, or rather both the heroes, live in adultery (and that too in both instances of an aggravated kind), these are the conditions of the Romance, which must be taken with it for better for worse: they are the original elements, of which the author was to make the best he could. But it is the fault of the author that so many of the leading incidents should shock, not merely our ordinary morals, which are conventional and belong to our age, but those feelings which belong to human nature in all ages. The characters also are in many instances discordant with themselves; and the fault, so frequent in

such books, of degrading one hero to enhance the fame of another, is carried here to great excess. An author may do what he will with the creatures of his own creation,—they are as clay in the potter's hand,—but it is a foul offence in literature to take up the personage whom another writer has described as a Knight of prowess and of worth, and engraft vices upon him, and stain him with dishonour. Who could bear to see Desdemona represented as an adultress?

XIII. The Romance of Meliadus de Leonnoys, the father of Tristram, is, in my judgement, very superior to that of the son.

Le Roman de Méliadus de Léonnois, Chevalier de la Table Ronde; où sont contenues, avec les faits d'armes, plusieurs proëesses de Chevalerie faites par le bon Roi Artus, Palamedes, & autres Chevaliers, estant au tems dudit Roi Méliadus: translaté du latin par Rusticien de Pise, et remis depuis en nouveau langage. Paris, Denys Janot, 1532, *in fol. gotiq.*

Amen.

Le present vollume des faitz & geztes du noble roy Méliadus de Léonnoys fut acheue d'imprimer a Paris le xx jour du moys de Mars Lan mil cinq cens xxxii.

The author of the Brut professes to have composed, or recompiled this volume, at the request of King Henry of England, from the Latin, in which it had been rudely and confusedly written by Master Rusticien de Pise, at the desire of an English King Edward. I do not believe that any of these Romances ever existed in Latin,—by whom, or for whom, could they have been written in that language? Nor would it be worth while to guess what Kings are intended, when the patrons may be as imaginary as the originals. Unlike all the other romances which have been noticed, I suppose Meliadus to have been the work of a single author;—and he sets out like a true Knight Errant who is in search of adventures, without knowing what course he shall take, or where his journey is to end. His intention was to write a book about

Palamedes,—the best conceived character in Tristram,—and in the name of Palamedes the author says he begins it; so he brings Esclabor, the father of this Knight, from Babylon to Rome, and from Rome to Northumberland, and having thus got to King Arthur, nothing more is said about the intended hero. A few desultory adventures of King Pharamond, and the Morhoult of Ireland, bring Meliadus on the stage, and his rival the *Bon Chevalier sans paour*. *Sans paour* he was, but not *sans reproche*, having at a tournament either done something which he ought not to have done, or left undone something which he ought to have done,—I do not recollect which, for many years have elapsed since I read the book, and the circumstance is not among my notes: but it is manifestly in reference to this character and this circumstance that the Chevalier Bayard obtained his well known appellation. Meliadus and the Bon Chevalier sans paour are the two heroes of the Romance, nor is it possible to discover which of them the author himself prefers, for he does them equal justice. Many tales of their heroism and of their rivalry are related, just in the manner of the episodes in Gyron, so much so indeed as decidedly to identify the author of the two books, were there no other proof. The manner in which each speaks of his rival is always very fine, and in the noblest spirit of chivalry.

The business of the first half the book ends in a tournament where they take different sides, and where on the whole the Bon Chevalier is the more fortunate. A more connected story follows. Meliadus falls in love with the Queen of Scotland and forcibly carries her off, out of King Arthur's dominions: for which he is attacked in his own kingdom, and by the prowess of the Bon Chevalier sans paour conquered and taken. Arthur imprisons him; but his confinement is more rigorous than the King either intends or knows. Meantime Arthur falls sick: his vassals (like Alexander's Captains) go to war with each other, and Ariohan, a terrible Saxon, at the instigation of

some of them, invades Logres. Arthur recovers, and summons all his liegemen, but the Bon Chevalier sans paour refuses to come, saying that the king has disgraced and wronged all chivalry by the manner in which he treats the best knight living. Meliadus is then delivered in consequence of this generous conduct on the part of his rival: he accepts a defiance from Ariohan, and concludes the war by defeating him. The remainder of the volume is filled up incoherently with any stories about the Round-Table Knights which came into the head of the author, or into the hands of the compiler. Galahad le Brun, Segurades, Gyron, Tristram, &c. &c. are introduced without the slightest connection of time, place, or anything else, and the whole ends with the death of Meliadus, in the words wherein it is related in Tristram.

XIV. Gyron le Courtoys is the work of the same author, whose style indeed is distinctly marked, especially in dialogue, and who in his tone of morals is infinitely superior to all the other Romancers of this school.

Le Roman de Gyron le Courtois; translaté de Branor le Brun, le vieil Chevalier qui avoit plus de cent ans d'âge, lequel vint a la Cour du Roi Artus, accompagné d'une Demoiselle, pour s'éprouver à l'encontre des jeunes Chevaliers, lesquels étoient les plus vaillans, ou les jeunes, ou les vieux; et comment il abbatit le Roi Artus, et quatorze Rois qui en sa compagnie étoient, et pareillement tous les Chevaliers de la Table Ronde, de coups de lance: et traite ledit Livre, des plus grandes Adventures que jadis advinrent aux Chevaliers Errans; avec la devise et les armes de tous les Chevaliers de la Table Ronde. Paris, Ant. Verard, sans date, in fol. gotiq.

Imprime a paris pour Anthoine verard marchant libraire demourāt a Paris pres petit pont deuant la rue neufue nostre dame a lenseigne Saint iehan leuangeliste. Ou au palais au premier pil-

lier deuant la chappelle ou lon chante la messe de messeigneurs les presidens.

This romance begins with an adventure of Branor le Brun, a knight above an hundred and twenty years of age, who though he had not borne arms for forty years, comes to Camelot to try whether the knights of King Arthur's court were as good as those of his days. He is however so persuaded of their inferiority, that he only invites them to run at him, as at a *quintain*. Palamedes, Gawain, and many others unhorse themselves in doing this; but the old knight honours the king, Sir Tristram, and Sir Lancelot so much as to take a spear against them, and he overthrows them like so many children. An adventure of Tristram and Palamedes then follows (without any connection) which is in the Morte Arthur.

Gyron is now introduced, and goes to Maloanc, the castle of his friend Danayn le Roux. The lady of Maloanc, Danayn's wife, falls in love with him, and tempts him twice, but without effect. They go to a tournament, where Meliadus and his friend Sir Lac are present; Sir Lac becomes enamoured of the lady, waylays her after the tournament, and wins her from her escort of five and twenty knights, but loses her himself to Gyron. Gyron unluckily has now caught from Sir Lac the love with which the lady herself had not been able to inspire him; his heart gives way to the temptation; he leads her, "nothing loth," to a fountain in the forest, and takes off his armour. "At this point of time, when they were in this guise, ready to commit the villainy, then it happened that the spear of Gyron which was placed against a tree, fell upon his sword and made it fall into the fountain. And Gyron who, as ye have heard, loved this sword greatly, as soon as he saw it fall into the water, ran towards it, and left the lady. And when he came to the fountain, and saw that the sword was at the bottom of the water, he took it out, being greatly vexed, and drew it from the scabbard, and began to wipe it. And then he began to regard the letters which were

written upon the sword; they had been cut there by reason of the good knight Hector le Brun. And these were the proper words which were there written: *Loyaulte passe tout, et faulsete si h nuit tout, et decoit tous hommes dedans quals elle se herberge.*" Upon this his conscience smites him with such remorse for having sinned in intention, that he instantly stabs himself. The lady, who is called by no other name than La Belle Dame de Maloanc, prevents him from repeating the blow, and after a while Red Danayn finds them in this situation. The whole truth is acknowledged to him, and he, not to be wanting in generosity, loves Gyron more than ever for this his courtesy, as it is termed, and takes him home to Maloanc, where he is soon healed. During all this time Gyron is only known to this family, the rest of the world supposing him to be dead. A great deal concerning Hector le Brun is related by way of episode to King Meliadus, and Gyron occasionally hears stories of himself introduced with considerable skill, as well as interest, to raise his character.

This part of the Romance, though interrupted with some episodical matter, has more unity of purpose than is usual in such works. There is no other division than that of chapters; but in what may be called the second part, the character, or more properly the conduct of the two friends is reversed. Red Danayn going to escort a damsel for Gyron, to whom she appertains, betrays his trust, and carries her off; Gyron pursues him, and overtaking him at last, defeats him after a desperate combat, and though he had determined to take his life, spares him for the sake of courtesy. Immediately afterwards he rescues him from a giant. The incidental parts in this division, are, a story of Galahalt le Brun, with whom Gyron in his youth had been companion; and a curious adventure of Breus sans pitie, in which he finds the bodies of Febus and the damsel of Northumberland in a house hewn in a rock; and learns their history from the son of Febus, a very old man, who in this habitation leads a life of penance with his son, which son is the father of Gyron, a fact

of which Gyron is ignorant, he it appears being in the predicament of Prince Prettyman. Then comes an excellent adventure of the knight sans paour in the valley of Serfage, where Naban the black makes serfs of every person who enters: the reader is referred for the sequel to the Romance of Meliadus. Danayn in his turn delivers Gyron and his damsel, who had been betrayed, and were tied to a tree that they might suffer from the severity of the weather in the cold country of Sorolois. These knights are now reconciled; they separate, each seeking adventures, both are made prisoners; and we are referred to the history of Meliadus for their release, "the Latin book from which this is translated saying no farther." The Romance ends with a chapter in which Galineus the white, son of Gyron and the Damsel, who was born in the preceding chapter, defeats the best knights of the Round Table one after another; but he is a wicked knight himself, having been wickedly brought up by the false traitor who imprisoned his father.

Francis the first of France preferred this to all other books of chivalry, and for that reason commanded Luigi Alamanni to versify it in Italian; the command was repeated by his successor Henry II.; but Alamanni added little to his reputation by the poem; the easy sweetness of his verse is less delightful than the simplicity and strength of the old prose. The poet has justly praised the morality of his story; I know no other Romance so completely free from all impurities of thought or language; there are indications enough in it of an immoral age, but it seems as if the writer had escaped the contagion. Either in the poem or in the Romance, Spenser probably found the original of his Braggadochio. What may be suspected in many of these books appears almost certain in this, that the writer frequently, when he began an adventure, knew as little how it was to end, as the knight who set off in quest of one; he invented the story as he proceeded with it, and sometimes in its progress modified, or completely changed the character which he brought upon the

stage. It is worthy of notice that in this Romance the knights of King Arthur's court are represented as mere children to those of Uther Pendragon's days. The prowess of these elder worthies exceeds even the hyperboles of Esplandian: one of them makes nothing of attacking large armies single-handed, and killing giants with a blow of the fist.

XV. I am indebted to Mr. Heber's usual kindness for the use of Lancelot, Tristram, Meliadus, and Gyron. The following work, great part of which is incorporated in the Morte Arthur, is in Mr. Laing's collection.

Lhystoire du sainct greaal, Qui est le premier livre de la table ronde; lequel traicte de plusieurs matieres recreatives. Ensemble la queste dudict sainct greaal ffaicte par Lancelot, Galaad, Boors et Perceval, qui est le dernier livre de la table ronde; lesquelz livres ne furent jamais imprimez jusques a present.

Avec le privilege du roy nostre sire jusques a troys ans lequel sensuyt.

Le roy nostre sire a donne et ottroye lettres de grace et privilege a Galiot du pre marchant libraire, demourant a paris, de faire imprimer le livre du sainct greaal. Et deffend ledict seigneur a tous marchans libraires et aultres quelconques du royaume de France quilz ne impriment ne facent imprimer ledict livre jusques a troys ans apres ensuyvans finis et acomplis, en cas de debat lesdictes inhibitions et deffences tenans nonobstant autres lettres subreplices et a ce contraires. Donne a Paris le xxvii jour de Janvier Mil cinq cens et quatorze.

Par le roy, et syne Bucelly.

The first volume concludes at f. 122, (erroneously numbered 116.)

Cy fine le premier livre et hystoire du sainct Greaal utille et prouffitable a tous chrestiens qui desirent scavoir et veoir plusieurs

choses merveilleuses des haulx faitz dont nostre seigneur Jhesucrist voulut douer ses vrays serviteurs chevaliers errans pour la loy exaulcer et la foy de crestiente entretenir.

The paging is continued through the second volume.

Le second volume du sainct greaal, contenant la conqueste dudict sainct Greaal, faicte par Lancelot du Lac, Galaad, Perceval et Boors.

Cy fine le derrenier volume de la queste du sainct greaal, faisant mention de plusieurs merveilleuses adventures, faictes et mises a fin par les compaignons de la table ronde, et principallement de par Galaad filz de Lancelot du lac, qui a este la derreniere branche de cestuy livre venue et yssue de la semence de Joseph darimathie. Nouvellement imprime a Paris. Par Jehan petit Galiot du pre, et Michel le noir Libraires demourans a Paris. Le xxv jour de Septembre Mil cinq cens et seize.

This remarkable book is said to have been translated by command of the Holy Church, from Latin into French, by a person whose name is sometimes written Sire Robert de Berron, sometimes de Bosron, and whose christian name is as little determined, being in some places Robert, and in others Pierre. The name perhaps is as fictitious as the command of the church; bold, however, as the latter falsehood may appear, the author has advanced a more extraordinary assertion, which I know not whether to qualify as fiction or as intended imposture. He affirms that what he is relating ought to be received as truth, *car celluy,* he proceeds, *seroit plain de trop folle hardiesse qui oseroit monstre mensonge en si haulte chose comme est ceste saincte hystoire* que le vray crucifix fist et escripvit de sa propre main, *et pour ce doit il estre tenu en plus grant honneur.* He then proceeds to say, that according to the Scriptures, our Saviour wrote only twice during his mortal life, once when he composed the Lord's prayer, and once when the woman was taken in adultery; *ja ne trouvons si hardy clerc qui dye que Dieu fist oncques escripture puis*

la resurrection, ne mais la saincte escripture du Sainct Greaal seullement, et qui vouldroit dire que puis il eust fait autre escripture de auctorite il seroit tenu a menteur: et si dy bien quil seroit de trop folle hardyesse qui mensonge vouldroit mettre en si haulte chose comme est ceste hystoire que le filz de Dieu escripvit luy mesmes de sa propre main, puis que il eust mis la mortelle vie hors, et revestu la mageste celestielle.

Whether this blasphemous fiction be the unpardonable license of a romancer's fancy, or the pious fraud of some zealous believer in transubstantiation, I presume not to determine: in the dark ages there were no bounds either to such fancies or such frauds. Legends not less impudent have obtained belief in the Romish church; and if the light of knowledge, which at one time trembled in its socket, had been put out, the Sainct Greaal, with whatever intent it was written, might possibly have become one of the sacred books of the west, as the Mahabbarat and the Ramayuna are received for holy scripture in India.

The first part of this book is clearly by one hand, and that hand may be traced (if I mistake not) in Lancelot du Lac, which in its printed state seems to have undergone many interpolations. The legend of the tree of life is found in both Romances, and the dreams, types and moralizations of the Sainct Greaal, like the Lord Savage, the Physician without physic, and the Speaking Flowers at the beginning of Lancelot, are precisely in the worst manner of the Gesta Romanorum. There is not the slightest allusion to the tradition concerning Glastonbury, the writer therefore was ignorant even of the legendary history of England. The second part has no moralizations, and appears to be by a different author, perhaps by many; of this indeed there is internal proof: Perceval, whose name is thus written towards the conclusion, is in other places called Perlevaulx.

XVI. This personage is the hero of a Romance which is also in

Mr. Laing's collection, and from which some parts are blended with the story of the S. Greaal in the Morte Arthur.

¶ *Tresplaisante et Recreative Hystoire du Trespreulx et vaillant Chevallier Perceval le galloys, Jadis chevallier de la Table ronde. Lequel acheva les adventures du sainct Graal. Avec aulchuns faictz belliqueulx du noble chevallier Gauvain Et aultres Chevalliers estans au temps du noble Roy Arthus non au paravant Imprime.*

¶ *Avec privilege.*

¶ *On les vend au Pallais au Paris. En la boutique de Jehan Longis, Jehun sainct denis, et Galliot du pre. Marchans libraires demourant audict lieu.*

¶ *Fin du Romant et Hystoire du preulx et vaillant Chevallier Perceval le Galloys. Jadis Chevallier de la Table ronde. Lequel acheva les adventures du Sainct Graal. Avec auchuns faitz bellequeulx du noble chevallier Gauvain. Et aultres Chevalliers estans au temps du noble Roy Arthus. Le tout nouvellement Imprime a Paris, pour honnestes personnes Jehan sainct denis. et Jehan Longis, marchans Libraires demourans audict lieu. Et fut acheve de Imprimer le premier jour de Septembre. Lan mil cinq cens trente.*

It is stated in the Prologue to this volume, that Philip, Count of Flanders, gave orders to bring to light the life and chivalrous feats of Perceval, according to the chronicle of the said Prince, and the treatise of the Sainct Greaal. Both the count and his chronicler died before this could be accomplished. A long time after, Madame Jehanne, Countess of Flanders, seeing the beginning of this chronicle, and knowing what had been the intention of her ancestor Count Philip, ordered *ung sien familier orateur*, by name Mennessier, to translate and complete the work. "The which he did, but forasmuch as his language, and that of his predecessor, is not after the usage of our common French, but altogether unaccustomed and strange, to satisfy the desires, pleasures, and will of the princes, lords, and others who follow the mother tongue of France, I, says

the writer, have employed myself in translating the book, and converting it from rhyme into prose, following closely, according to my possibility and power, the sense of my preceding translators." I know not whether the metrical Romance was in Flemish, or in the Walloon dialect, or in the dialect of Picardy, in which some writers have supposed that Amadis of Gaul was originally written, in contradiction to the most positive and undoubted evidence.

This volume seems rather to have been made up from many metrical Romances than from one. One story in it may decidedly be traced to a Welsh or Breton origin. A chapter begins thus, *icy fine et fault le compte de lescu*, when no tale of a shield has been told. An adventure of Gawain is related with gross inconsistencies, which could not have existed in any single original; and Gawain occupies as great a portion of the book as Perceval himself. Perceval, though clearly identified with the personage of that name in the Sainct Greaal, is not represented here as having the virtue of continence. The Romance has many interesting situations, but Perceval, as here pourtrayed, is less attractive than any of his compeers.

XVII. There are other Romances which I have not met with, from whence materials for the Morte Arthur have been drawn; but these are the principal sources, Lancelot, Tristan, and the Sainct Greaal, having furnished nearly two thirds of the whole. Whether this compilation was made originally by Sir Thomas Malory, or translated by him from a French compendium, has not been ascertained; nor is it of importance, as there is no claim to originality on his part. The compiler seems to have altered the incidents as freely as the arrangement, and may perhaps have made some additions of his own; Mr. Douce has suggested that he used manuscripts to the texts of which we may probably always be strangers, and this therefore must remain doubtful. It is probable also that some of his materials have never been printed. "O blessed Lord," says Caxton,

" when I remember the great and many volumes of St. Graal, Ghalehot, and Lancelot du Lac, Gawain, Perceval, Lionel and Tristram, and many other, of whom were over long to rehearse, and also to me unknown." Ghalehot may perhaps mean the *hault Prince* Galehault, who figures in the history of Lancelot; or more probably Galahad, who sate in the siege perilous, of whom there certainly existed a separate Romance; it was the favourite book of Nuno Alvarez Pereira, who endeavouring as far as possible to imitate the character which he admired, became himself the fair ideal of a perfect knight, as courteous as he was brave, as humane as he was courteous, as pious as he was humane, uniting in himself the accomplishments of a hero, the feelings of a true patriot, and the virtues of a christian and a saint.

It seems too, from the exclamation of Caxton, that Gawain and Lionel had each their history; but I believe none are known to be in existence, or at least that none have been published. The story of Beaumayns has, from its structure and completeness, the appearance of having been a metrical Romance. I do not know from whence the story of Balin and Balan has been derived; it has finer circumstances in it than any other part of the Morte Arthur.

The history of the Round Table Romances may be investigated with better opportunities in France than in England; but it must be sought for also among the remains of the Welsh and Breton fictions, and something may perhaps be discovered in the Walloon tongue, though it is to be feared that many a precious manuscript may have perished during the first frenzy of the revolution in Brabant and the adjoining countries. If a society for this purpose were formed by the lovers of chivalrous literature in all countries, the members, while they procured their own individual gratification, would contribute something toward the restoration of that feeling which formerly prevailed in the republic of letters, but which the convulsions of the political world have so long and so mournfully suspended. The

object should be, a faithful republication of all this family of romances, whether in verse or prose, with a careful investigation of the history of each. It would not be difficult to detect, from internal marks, the order in which they were written, though perhaps impossible to ascertain the time. In their present state the productions of very different times are frequently blended together. Much light would be thrown, in the progress of these researches, upon the history of literature and the manners of the middle ages.

XVIII. The Morte Arthur was a favourite book among our ancestors. It continued to be printed till the middle of the 17th century, with much alteration of orthography, but very little change of language; and were it again modernized in the same manner, and published as a book for boys, it could hardly fail of regaining its popularity. When I was a schoolboy I possessed a wretchedly imperfect copy, and there was no book, except the Faery Queen, which I perused so often, or with such deep contentment.

The present edition is a reprint with scrupulous exactness from the first edition by Caxton, in Earl Spencer's library, that nobleman having, with his wonted liberality, permitted a transcript to be made from this most rare and valuable volume for this purpose.

XIX. "In books of chivalry," says Addison, "where the point of honour is strained to madness, the whole story runs on chastity and courage. The damsel is mounted on a white palfrey, as an emblem of her innocence; and to avoid scandal must have a dwarf for her page. She is not to think of a man, until some misfortune has brought a knight errant to her relief. The knight falls in love, and did not gratitude restrain her from murdering her deliverer, would die at her feet by her disdain. However he must waste many years in the desert, before her virgin heart can think of a surrender. The knight goes off, attacks every thing he meets that is bigger and

stronger than himself, seeks all opportunities of being knocked on the head; and after seven years rambling returns to his mistress, whose chastity has been attacked in the mean time by giants and tyrants, and undergone as many trials as her lover's valour." This is altogether inaccurate. Addison appears not to have read the books which he thus characterises: he mingles the manners of the chivalrous romance with the morals of Cassandra, Cleopatra, Clelia, and other works of that class which were fashionable in his days, and has thus produced a description which resembles neither. Amadis was the first romance in which the female character was made respectable; and even there, although the author designed to make the women as admirable as the heroes of his tale, he thought the virtue of chastity might be dispensed with, provided they were constant in their love.

The morals of the chivalrous romance were however always taken at the highest standard of the age, except perhaps in Tirante the White, where they are brutal even to loathsomeness; but the ferocious spirit of the times frequently appears. Gawain and his brothers rescue their mother from a villainous knight, who has beaten and bruised her as shamefully as the Infantes of Carrion used the daughters of the Cid. Gawain killed him; "and then Aggravain, Gaheret, and Gaheriet, alighted from their horses, and the one cut off his head, and the other cut off his arms, and the other ran his sword through his body; and still this did not satisfy them, but they cut him in pieces, like flesh upon a chopping board*." Lancelot and Palamedes take a squire belonging to Naban the Black, of the valley of Serfage. "Sir," said Lancelot, "what shall we do with this squire? It is proper to shame him in his members, and send him back to Naban, in order to enrage him and do him a despite. Go then to the squire, and cut off one of his feet, and one of his hands, and bore out one of his eyes; and set him again upon his horse, and send him back to his master the giant, and tell him that Lancelot du Lac and Palamedes, companions of the Round Table, have done him this

* Merlin, T. i. f. 142.

despite: and that we will speedily come and visit him. And as Lancelot had commanded, so it was done*." The argument of a chapter in the Sainct Greaal runs thus: "how Perlevaulx had a tub made ready, and made all the knights of the Sire des Mares be beheaded before him, so that their blood should run into the tub; and how he caused the Sire des Mares to be drowned in this tub, in the blood of his knights!" The history of Europe during the middle ages, is full of cruelties like these: it must be considered as a great merit in the romance writers, that they have not introduced them more frequently; that they have sometimes reprehended them, and that in their ideal heroes they held up for imitation fairer models of heroic virtue than were to be found in real life. Chivalry was in its noon-day glory under Edward III., and the influence of chivalrous literature may be traced not only in the splendour of his magnificent court, but in the virtues of the Black Prince.

XX. The authors of these books never supposed that they were outraging probability; none of the marvels which they feigned were regarded as impossible; they were all founded upon the received opinions of the age; the belief in magic, the science of gems, and the wonderful properties of wells, fountains, and lakes, whose effects were described in books, the authenticity of which had never been questioned. Travellers and naturalists told of more monsters than the romance writers ever devised. Their giants were not larger than those who are sometimes imported from Ireland; they are frequently represented as fighting on horseback, and it was never thought necessary to imagine a breed of gigantic horses for their use. Boyardo indeed, or Berni, exceeds this; but his license is that of a burlesque writer, the vice of all the Italian romantic poets. Even they never created giants of such steeple-stature as was attributed to the heroes of old, whose sepulchres were said to be discovered in different lands, and whose fancied bones were actually shewn in museums.

* Meliadus, f. 229.

It is in describing their tournaments, and the exploits of their knights on horseback, that the Romance writers have committed the greatest exaggeration: their heroes seldom encounter without breaking a lance, and giving or receiving a fall. There exists, however, a full account of the proceedings at a pass which Sucro de Quiñones, and nine companions, maintained at the Bridge of Orbigo in Spain, against all comers, for thirty days, in the year 1434. This *Paso Honroso*, as it is called, is the most famous adventure of its kind that was ever undertaken; and a writer was present who recorded all the circumstances with the utmost minuteness. This curious record has not been preserved, but a careful compendium of it was published in 1588, by Fr. Juan de Pineda, author of the Monarquia Ecclesiastica, and having become exceedingly scarce, was reprinted at Madrid in 1783. Seven hundred and twenty seven careers were run; the combatants frequently failed in their career, and seldom fell. One person was killed, the lance unfortunately piercing him in the eye; very few were hurt, and only an hundred and sixty six spears were broken. This appears poor jousting after a tournament in Romance, yet it is not likely ever to have been excelled in any real exhibition.

The prowess of the knights of Romance in other respects is not much exaggerated. Lancelot and Tristram in armour are what the Chicken and Gulley were without it; men of the greatest skill, strength, and courage, in a mode of fighting wherein those qualifications rendered success certain.

XXI. Nothing can be more inartificial in structure than the Romances of the Round Table. Adventure produces adventure in infinite series; not like a tree, whose boughs and branches bearing a necessary relation and due proportion to each other, combine into one beautiful form, but resembling such plants as the prickly pear, where one joint grows upon another, all equal in size and alike in

shape, and the whole making a formless and misshapen mass. Even this clumsy mode of transition is often disregarded, and the author passes from adventure to adventure without the slightest connection, introducing you without prologue or prelude of any kind to a new scene, and bringing forward a new set of personages. In this respect Amadis is greatly superior to every other work of the same description. Lobeira was the first Romance writer who formed a clear and connected plan, and bore it steadily in mind throughout the whole progress of his narrative. The skill with which his fable is constructed is not less admirable than the beauty of the incidents, and the distinctness with which the characters are conceived and delineated. Amadis infinitely surpasses every earlier romance in all these points, and has not been equalled in either of them by any of later date.

These folios were the only books of recreation when they were composed and printed; and in those ages large volumes were not regarded with that fear which is now felt by the busy, and affected by the superficial and the vain. A folio romance was the stock of amusement for weeks or months, a dozen or a score of pages sufficed for the evening's reading; and perhaps more satisfaction was gained than lost by travelling thus deliberately through the story: it became an habitual pleasure. The rapidity of modern narrative is less readily understood, and produces fainter effect; these tales were slowly received, and made a profound impression, as slow showers penetrate the deepest; and hence it was that they so strongly affected the manners and morals of the age. As the manners have become obsolete, the fashion for such works has passed away; and now for the full enjoyment of them a certain aptitude is required, as it is for poetry and music: where that aptitude exists, perhaps no works of imagination produce so much delight. It is something like that pleasure which the poet and the painter partake from forest scenery, or in following the course of a mountain stream.

Notes to the Preface.

READING a rare accomplishment. § I.]—The knights in romance are seldom represented as deficient in this respect, still it is spoken of as an accomplishment. When Gawain wins the *espee aux estranges renges* which had belonged to Judas Maccabeus, and Joseph of Arimathea, he finds an inscription upon it, and the writer tells us that he could read well,—*Et Gauvain qui bien sçavoit lire tendit la main*, &c. Perceval, f. 68.

It appears that Perceval himself could not read; *entour de cest anneau y avoit en escript en lectres dargent deux vers en latin qui signifioent, que nul chevallier naresne a lannel son destrier, sil ne se peult comparer au meilleur chevallier du monde.* Perceval ne sçavoit pas lyre, *mais bien en avoit ouy parler*, &c. f. 177.

In the Partidas there are reasons given why it is proper that the sons of a king should be taught to read and write.

Some of the Arabian Tales bear the strongest features of chivalrous romance. § IV.]—In a note to Ewlia's Travels, the translator, M. Hanmer, says, that the three principal heroes of Arabian chivalry are Antar, Hamza, and Seedi Battaul. Antar is the author of one of the seven poems called the Moallakat, known to English readers by Sir W. Jones's translation. Hamza was a hero of the first age of Islam, and uncle of Mahommed; his deeds are celebrated in the Hamzanamah. Seede Battaul is the hero of the age when Islam had attained its highest power and splendour. M. Hanmer says, that this title signifies literally the same as Cid el Campeador, and that Ruydiez de Bivar obtained this title in imitation of the Mussulman hero; in this he is assuredly mistaken.

Arthur. § VI.]—According to Mr. Owen, Arthur is recorded with Morgan the Courteous, and Rhun, as one of the three blood-stained sovereigns of Britain; an appellation not less equivocal than it is indiscriminating. But it appears in the Cambrian Biography, that there is a different edition of this triad, in which Llew Llawgyfes appears instead of Arthur. And in another work, where Arthur's name is retained, a different interpretation is given of the epithet, making them the three ruddy chiefs. If this be not as vague an epithet as that of blood-stained, it would tend to shew that the Keltic complexion did not predominate at that time; among the chiefs perhaps it did not, owing to the mixture of Roman, and, in the west of England possibly also, of Iberian blood.

The slight mention which Llywarch has made of Arthur may perhaps be accounted for by the triad which records that bard as one of the three free and discontented guests of Arthur's court. But some of Llywarch's poems have been lost, and in these there may have been more notice of the Welsh hero.

Geffrey of Monmouth's History, after long maintaining its credit, was included in the Index Expurgatorius. "I know not," says Hakewill, "why it should stand branded with a black coal among the books prohibited by the church of Rome." There would, however, be good reason for the prohibition if the following story, which Giraldus Cambrensis relates, were true.

"It is worthy of observation, that there lived in the neighbourhood of this city of legions in our time, a Welshman named Melerius, who, by the following means, acquired the knowledge of future events, and the occult sciences. Having on a certain night met a damsel whom he loved in a pleasant and convenient place; while he was indulging in her embraces, instead of a beautiful girl, he found in his arms a hairy, rough and hideous creature, the sight of which deprived him of his senses; and after remaining many years in this condition, he was restored to health in the church of Saint David's, through the merits of its saints. But having always had an extraordinary familiarity with unclean spirits by seeing them, knowing them, talking with them, and calling each by his proper name, he was enabled, through their assistance, to foretel future events: he was indeed often deceived (as they are) with respect to circumstances at a great distance; but was less mistaken in affairs which were likely to happen soon, or within the space of a year. They appeared to him on foot, equipped as hunters, with horns suspended from their necks, and truly as hunters not of animals but of souls: he particularly

met them near monasteries and religious places; for where rebellion exists, there is the greatest need of armies and strength. He knew when any one spoke falsely in his presence, for he saw the devil, as it were, leaping and exulting upon the tongue of the liar: and if he looked into a book faultily or falsely written, although wholly illiterate, he would point out the place with his finger. Being questioned how he could gain such knowledge, he said that he was directed by the demon's finger to the place. In the same manner entering into the dormitory of a monastery, he indicated the bed of any monk not sincerely devoted to religion: for he said, that the spirit of gluttony and surfeit was in every respect sordid; but that the spirit of luxury and lust was more beautiful than others in appearance, though, in fact, most foul. When the evil spirits oppressed him too much, the Gospel of Saint John was placed on his bosom, when, like birds, they immediately vanished; but when that book was removed, and the history of the Britons, by Geoffry ap Arthur, substituted in its place, they instantly re-appeared in greater numbers, and remained a longer time on his body and on the book. It is worthy of remark, that Barnabas placed the Gospel of St. Matthew upon sick persons, and they were healed; from which, as well as from the foregoing circumstance, it appears how great a dignity and reverence is due to the sacred books of the Gospel, and with what danger and risk of damnation every one who swears falsely by them deviates from the paths of truth." Hoare's Giraldus, 1. 106.

Certain it is that many of the Round Table fictions originated in Wales, or in Bretagne. § VII.]—In Mr. Owen's Cambrian Biography is the name of "CARADOG VREICHVRAS, or Caradog with the Brawny Arm, the son of Llyr Merini, Prince of the Cornish Britons, in the close of the fifth and the former part of the sixth centuries. He is styled in the triads, one of the three celebrated commanders of cavalry."

A considerable part of the Romance of *Perceval le Gallois* relates to this personage, and the character of this part is so very different from the usual manner of Romance, that I suspected it to be of different origin, before, almost by accident, I was enabled thus satisfactorily to trace it. I will as concisely as possible abstract the story, in hope that some Welsh or Breton antiquarian may pursue it to its source.

King Carados, who holds his court at Nantes, marries Ysenne, the beautiful niece of Arthur. Unfortunately she had attracted the affections of Eliaures, a knight and enchanter. (This name bears a remote re-

semblance to Llyr Merini, but a closer one to Llwyr vab Llwyrion, mentioned in the Cambrian Biography, as "a mythological character.") The enchanter deceives the husband in a manner too loathsome to be repeated, and becomes the father of a young Carados, whom the king believes to be his son and lawful heir. When the youth is of proper years, King Arthur holds a *court planiere* for the purpose of knighting him. On such occasions it was the well-known custom of the king never to dine till some adventure had presented itself, and this day there happened a very remarkable one; for a knight made his appearance, and having obtained a boon, on condition that what he should ask was reasonable, replied, that he would deceive nobody: fair blow for blow was what he desired; he would lay his neck on a block for any knight to strike, on condition that if his head were cut off, and he should recover from the wound, the knight should submit in his turn to the same experiment. Sir Kay, with good reason, thought this a very uncomfortable proposal, and protested that he would not accept it for all the wealth in the world. And when the knight offered his sword with which the operation was to be performed, no person ventured to accept it; till Carados, growing angry at the sort of disgrace which was thus incurred by the Round Table, threw aside his mantle and took it. "Do you do this as one of the best knights?" said the stranger, "No," he replied, "but as one of the most foolish." The stranger lays his head upon a block, receives a blow which sends it rolling from his shoulders, walks after it, picks it up, replaces it with great success, and says he will return when the court shall be assembled next year, and claim his turn. When the anniversary arrives, both parties are punctual to their engagement; great entreaties are used by the king and queen, and the whole court, in behalf of Carados, but the stranger is inflexible; the young knight lays his neck upon the block, and more than once desires him to make an end of the business, and not keep him longer in so disagreeable a state of expectation. At last he strikes him gently with the side of the sword, takes him aside, and tells him, what the reader has probably surmised, that he is his father, Eliaures the enchanter, revealing to him the whole secret of his birth, and all the abominable circumstances connected with it.

Carados, who is very much distressed at the discovery, goes immediately to Nantes, and discloses it to the king. It is ascertained that Ysenne still continues her adulterous intercourse with the enchanter; to prevent which, and to punish him in the most lenient manner, she is by

her son's advice confined in a tower. But bars, bolts, and stone walls are no obstacles to an enchanter; Eliaures persists in visiting her, and entertains her at night with concerts to the disturbance of the neighbourhood, who complain to the king. Carados is again consulted; by his help the enchanter is surprised and taken; and the king subjects him in revenge to the same unutterable indignities which he himself had been made to commit. The incident is perhaps the most disgusting that occurs in any work of fiction; and it is to be regretted that it should defile a story which is in other respects of singular beauty, and even purity of feeling.

Eliaures would have borne this revenge more patiently than might have been expected from an enchanter, as if he was conscious of being the aggressor. Ysenne, on the other hand, conceives a deadly hatred against her son, and insists that her paramour shall inflict upon him some cruel punishment. He yields to her intreaties; and by his directions when Carados next visits her, she pretends to have her hair dishevelled, and desires him to reach her comb from the closet. When he opens the closet, a serpent, enchanted for the purpose, fastens upon his arm, and remains there sucking at his flesh and blood,—no human skill sufficing either to remove the reptile, or alleviate the torments which Carados endures.

Carados was betrothed to Guimier, sister to his bosom friend Cador, and daughter to the King of Cornwall. As soon as they are informed of his deplorable condition, they set out for Nantes, that Guimier may attend upon him. When he hears of their coming, his first emotion is that of joy and love: presently he begins to fear that the sight of his emaciated form and of his sufferings will disgust Guimier; and this apprehension becomes so strong, that he departs secretly from Nantes, and hides himself in a hermitage. He is sought far and near by the knights of Arthur's court; and Cador makes a vow never to desist from the quest till he shall have found him. He goes through "England, Ireland, Gueldres, Northumberland, Scotland, and Spain," and then returning into Bretagne, after more than two years wandering, discovers him in the hermitage, reduced almost to a skeleton, and evidently near his death. All other means of relief having already been tried in vain, Cador has recourse to the wicked mother, and succeeds in exciting her to have compassion upon her son. Accordingly she applies to Eliaures, being in great fear of losing her soul if Carados should lose his life. The enchanter tells her that he could not live three months longer unless he were re-

lieved, and that there is but one method of delivering him. A maiden must be found, his equal in birth and in beauty, and loving him better than herself, so that she will expose herself to the same danger to deliver him. Two vessels are then to be provided, the one filled with sour wine, and the other with milk. Carados must enter the first, naked, so that the wine shall reach his neck; and the maid, naked in like manner, must get into the other, and exposing her bosom upon the edge of the vessel, invite the serpent to forsake the withered flesh of his victim, for this fresh and inviting food. The vessels were to be placed three feet apart, and as the serpent crossed from one to the other, a knight was to cut off his head: if he failed in his blow, Carados indeed would be delivered, but it would be only to see the object of his love suffering the same cruel and hopeless torment. The sequel is easily foreseen; Guimier willingly exposes herself to the perilous adventure, and Cador kills the serpent. That arm in which Carados had suffered so long recovered its strength, but not its shape; the tendons and the very bones were swoln, in consequence of which he was called Carados Briefbras, manifestly the *Vreichvras* of Mr. Owen's Caradog.

Shortly afterwards the adventure of the drinking horn occurs at Arthur's court, as in the ballad of the Boy and the Mantle, Carados being the Cradoc of the poem. The ballad is evidently older than the printed Romance of Perceval, and therefore derived from the same source. How well his wife deserved the honour which she then obtained is shown by this story, which is more probably of Breton than of Welsh origin.

The single stanza which has been preserved of Arthur's composition, records Caradog as one of his favourite chiefs.

I have three heroes in battle,
Mael the tall, and Llyr with his army,
And Caradog the pillar of Wales.

Turner's Anglo Saxons, 1. 105.

A bold fiction, bordering upon impiety. § IX.]—"His mother's confession," says Heywood, (p. 3), "that he was conceived by the compression of a fantasticall spirituall creature, without a body, may be easily believed to be a meer fiction, or excuse, to mitigate her fault (being a royall virgin, the daughter of King Demetius), or to conceal the person of her sweet-heart, by disclosing of whose name she had undoubtedly exposed him to imminent danger; and this is most probable. And yet

we read that the other fantasticall congression is not impossible. For Speusippus the son of Plato's sister, and Elearchus the Sophist, and Amaxilides in the second book of his philosophy, affirm, in the honour of Plato, that his mother Perictione, having congression with the imaginary shadow of Apollo, conceived and brought into the world him who proved to be the Prince of Philosophers."

Faction and discontent applied this notion to Justinian; Procopius has done no injury to the emperor by recording it, but by affecting to believe the absurdities which he relates, he has effectually destroyed his own reputation; rendering himself infamous by grossly calumniating those whom he had formerly grossly flattered. The passage is not a little curious, if we remember that it is related as grave history, by the best historian of the age!

"Many of my friends are persuaded, and I also like them, that Justinian and Theodora are two malignant demons, who, after having held counsel together upon the means of ruining the world, have not found any more proper than that of assuming a human form. That which I advance can be justified by many proofs, but above all by the enormity of the evils which they have done, since the power of demons surpasses that of men. I admit that there have been formerly men who have rendered themselves formidable by the excess of their power, and by the wickedness of their nature; who have overthrown and desolated provinces, and who have been capable of changing the face of the whole earth; but fortune has seconded their intentions, and she has made inundations, earthquakes and contagious maladies, serve to the execution of their designs, in such a manner that the calamities which they have produced cannot be imputed to them, without imputing them at the same time to a superior power. They say that the mother of Justinian had declared to her friends that he was not the son of Sabatias, nor of any other man; but before she was pregnant of him, she had been visited by a genius who would not let himself be seen, though he made himself be felt, and who vanished like a dream. Some of his officers who had purer souls, and more disengaged from the corruption of the body, say, that they have often seen in his place a phantom during the night. There was one who said that as Justinian raised himself from his chair to walk, for he could not stay a long time in one place, he had seen his head disappear, the rest of his body not ceasing to walk; and as he doubted the fidelity of his eyes, and as he apprehended that it was only an illusion he had seen, the head was reunited to the body. Another

who had been accustomed to be always near him, related, that his countenance appeared sometimes like a shapeless mass, in which they could not distinguish any eyebrows, eyes, nose, mouth, or any other part; and that finally he resumed his ordinary form. I have not seen that which I write, but I have heard those say it, who declared that they had seen it. They say, that a monk who had made himself very agreeable to God by the ardour of his piety, and by the holiness of his manners, having been prayed by his brothers to go to Constantinople to speak in favour of the people of his neighbourhood, who suffered under great vexations, he was admitted before Justinian; but when he was upon the step of the door, he retired quite astonished, although the eunuch who introduced him, and the others who were present, invited him to enter: that when he was in the inn, and his friends asked him why he had fled in that manner, he answered, it was because he had seen the prince of the demons, and that he had not wished to ask any thing of him. Certainly there is no person who, in considering that he drank not, ate not, nor hardly slept at all, and however much he loved women, he walked all the night, who would not have taken him for a demon. Those who have formerly loved Theodora say, that when she prostituted herself upon the theatre, a demon often came who drove them away, and who passed the night with her. A dancing girl named Macedonia, who was of the faction of the blues at Antioch, and who in the reign of Justinian had acquired such a credit as to ruin by letters, which she wrote to Justinian, some principal people of the east, and to make their goods be confiscated; this dancing girl, I say, having gone to salute Theodora when she returned from Africa, and when she was afflicted with the injuries which Hecebolus had done her, and for the money which she had lost; and having consoled her by the hope that fortune one day would repair all her losses, Theodora replied to her, that the preceding night she had had a dream, which would not permit her to apprehend that she should want fortune, and which assured her that when she returned to Constantinople she would lie with the prince of the demons, and that she would acquire by this alliance all the treasures of the earth. This is the opinion that many have of Justinian and Theodora."

A miraculous conception is the only miracle which the Romish Hagiographists have not bestowed upon their saints. An approach to it has been made in the history of a Scotch saint Kehtigern. "There was a king in the north country, and he was a pagan. His daughter had

heard sermons; and nothing affected her imagination so much as the maiden fruitfulness of Mary the most pure. Admiring and loving this mystery, she desired and longed with a presumptuous boldness and a certain female temerity, to resemble the Virgin in that respect, and began to solicit the King of Heaven with assiduous prayers to this effect. After some time had elapsed she found reason to believe that her prayers were granted, and glorified God. *Quod enim in eâ natum est, de complexu humano suscepit; sed ipsa multoties asseruit, et juramento constrinxit, quod a quo, vel quando, aut quomodo conceperit, in conscientiâ non habebat. Populus enim diœcesis S. Kentegerni stultus et insipiens, ipsum de Virgine conceptum et natum adhuc astruere non veretur. Sed quis, aut quomodo sator terram araverit seu severit, cum Domino dante benignitatem, terra fructum optimum protulerit, absurdum sane diutius indagare arbitramur.*" *Acta Sanctorum.* 11 Jan. p. 816.

Heywood fixes the place of Merlin's birth; who, according to this veracious historian, was a Wiltshire man. "The town or citty called Kaier Merlin," he says, "which implies Merlin's town, or Merlin's borough, is no doubt the same which we call at this day Marlborrow." P. 20.

The Romance has a good remark upon his birth. "Merlin was great and tall of stature, and large of limb, and strong. But he was swarthy, and more hairy than any other man. And right noble he was, and courteous, *and a gentleman on his mother's side;* but of his father, says his historian, I shall say nothing, for you have already heard who begot him." Vol. ii. f. 13.

When the messengers whom Vortigern sent in search of Merlin that they might kill him, and bring his blood to sprinkle upon the foundations of Tumbledown Tower, came to the entrance of the town in which this misbegotten child lived, they saw a party of boys in a field who were playing at cross, *qui sesbasoyent et jouoyent a la crosse.* Merlin seeing the horsemen, and knowing for what they were come, in order to excite their attention the sooner, took his cross and struck one of the other boys with it across the shin, so as to break the leg almost in two; upon which the other began to reproach him with the manner and mystery of his birth. (Merlin, Vol. i. f. 18.) Children then used in those days to play at priests, as they now play at soldiers, making, I suppose, mock processions.

Blaise adjured him in the most solemn manner. § IX.]—*Et Blaise re-*

spondit, je feray voulentiers ce livre; mais je te conjure au nom du Pere, du Filz, et du Sainct Esperit, ainsi que je sçay et croy que ces trois sont une mesme chose en Dieu, et de la bien-euree dame que le filz de Dieu porta, et de tous ses Appostres, et de tous Anges, et de tous Archanges, et de tous Saintz, et de toutes Sainctes, et de tous les Prelatz de saincte Eglise, et de toutes les creatures qui croyent en Dieu et le prient, que tu ne me puisses decevoir ne faire chose que a Dieu doibt ne plaire.

Merlin. § IX.]—At the end of the first volume of Merlin are the following pious verses. They occur also at the end of the prophecies.

Dieu tout puissant, graces nous te rendons
De tous les biens quavons de toy receuz,
De nature, de grace, et aultres dons
De fortune parquoy sommes repeuz:
Te supplions que ne soyons deceuz
Par lennemy denfer nostre adversaire,
Mais nous octroy a grans et a menus
Ce que tu sçais qui nous est necessaire.

De noz deffaulx pardon te demandons,
Car en pechez sommes nez et conceuz,
Pourquoy trespeu chascun jour entendons
A toy servir comme sommes tenus.
Point nacquerons les haulx biens de lassus,
Le principal perdrons pour laccessaire;
Si te prions que nous donnes sans plus
Ce que tu sçais qui nous est necessaire.

Les trespassez nous te recommandons,
Et ceulx premier dont nous avons les biens,
Tous les vivans et desquelz amendons
Vueilles que ilz soient en ta grace promeuz,
Et en la fin logez otes esleuz
En leur baillant saint michel commissaire,
Au demeurant ordonne nous sa jus
Ce que tu sçais qui nous est necessaire.

Prince eternel, de toy sommes congneuz
Povrez chetifz, tardifz a te complaire
Concede nous des biens donc es pourveuz
Ce que tu sçais qui nous est necessaire.

Merlin's disappearance. § IX.]—The story is thus told in the Romance of Merlin; though the termination is the same as it is described in other Romances, the circumstances are very differently stated.

There was a Vavasour of high lineage called Dyonas* from Dyane, a goddess of the sea. This goddess requested from the Gods of the Sea that the first child of Dyonas might be a female, and that she might have, as long as she lived, the gifts of grace and of worth; and that she might be sued and loved by the wisest man in the world; and that this man, who would flourish during the reign of King Vertigiers (Vortigern) king of La Bloye Bretaigne, as soon as he saw her, should incontinently fall in love with her, and never be able to leave that love, but wherever he might be think every night of the beauty of that damsel; and that he might teach her the art of necromancy, and many other occult sciences, and never refuse her any thing which she asked. This Dyonas married a niece of the Dutchess of Burgundy, and received with her from the duke, half the forest of Briogne as part of her dowry; the other half belonged to King Ban, and was shortly afterwards given him also in reward for his good services. The first child of this marriage was a daughter who was named Nymanne, *qui est ung nom de Caldee,* says the French author, *qui est a dire en François* rien nen feray, *(ce nom se tourna dessus Merlin) car ceste fille fut sage et si prudent qui bien se sent garder de plusieures deceptions et chetivetez.*

When this damsel was twenty-two years of age, Merlin, as he was travelling through the forest of Briogne, saw her sitting by the side of a beautiful spring; immediately he became enamoured of her, and as he was at this time in the form of a fat handsome varlet, the lady had no objection to enter into conversation with him. He told her what wonders he could perform, and she promised to be his true love upon honourable terms, if he would show her those wonders of which he spake. *Je vous*

* *Et la raison pour quoy il fut nomme Dyonas est pour ce que la Seraine de Cecille, la mere de Dyanie, la nomme dessus les fons de baptesme, et pour le nom de Dyane fut nomme Dyonas.*

prie, dit la pucelle, Sire, que je voye une partie de vos jeux par tel convenant que a tousjours mais seray vostre acointee et vostre amye, sans mal et sans villenie. The enchanter accordingly called up a grove of trees, a beautiful meadow, a band of vocal and instrumental music, and a bevy of knights, squires, damsels, and dames, who danced to the sweetest sounds. The song, however, seems to have been ill chosen for the occasion, for its burthen was this:

Voirement se commencent amours
En joye, et se finent en doulleurs.

Presently a quintain was set up, and this sport was succeeded by jousting. When this was done, Merlin took the damsel by the hand and asked her what she thought of it; "Certes, said the lady, you have done so much that I am wholly yours. And then Merlin said, Lady, will you hold your covenant? By my faith, she replied, I will full willingly, so that you teach me your sports." A bargain was then made that Merlin should teach her every thing which she required, and that when he had fully instructed her in these arts, she would then consent to any thing which he might ask; upon these terms they plighted their true love to each other, and then he took his leave. Merlin, I. f. 145—7.

When Merlin related all this to his master Blaise, who seems to have been his confessor as well as historiographer, Blaise was much troubled, and censured him greatly, and gave him good advice; but good advice was lost upon Merlin, who saw his own fate, and with all his wisdom was unable to avoid it. Accordingly one day the enchanter took leave of his old master, telling him "it was the last time he would ever see him, for from thenceforth he must abide with his mistress, and should never more have the power of leaving her, nor of going and coming at his pleasure. When Blaise heard this, he said to him full sorrowfully, Since then it is so that you will not be able to depart when once you shall have gone there, fair friend go not there at all, for you well know the thing that must happen to you. Certes, answered Merlin, I needs must go, for so I have covenanted and promised; and even if I had not covenanted, I am so taken with her love that I could not forbear going. All this have I done myself, for I have taught her great part of what I know, and she will still learn more from me, for I have no power to withhold myself. With that Merlin departed from Blaise his master, and travelled so long in few hours, that he came to Viviane his

mistress." This was good travelling, for Blaise lived in Northumberland, and Viviane in France. They dwelt a long while together, and "she showed him greater semblance of love than she had ever done before, as one who knew so many enchantments that never other woman knew so much. So she devised within herself how she might detain him for ever more; but never could she compass nor achieve this: then was she full sorrowful and vexed, and cast about how she might discover it. Then began she to fawn and to flatter Merlin more than before; and she said to him, My sweet friend, I do not yet know one thing which I would fain know, I pray you teach me it. And Merlin, who well knew what it was, and to what she tended, said to her, Mistress, what is it? Sir, said Viviane, I would have you teach and show me how to inclose and imprison a man without a tower, without walls, without chains, but by enchantments alone, in such manner that he may never be able to go out, except by me. When Merlin heard her he shook his head, and began to sigh deeply; and Viviane, when she perceived it, asked of him wherefore he sighed thus. Dame, said Merlin, I will tell you. Well I know that you are devising how you may detain me; but I am so taken, that perforce will I or not, it behoves me to do your will. When Viviane heard this, for her great treason, and the better to delude and deceive him, she put her arms round his neck, and began to kiss him, saying, that he might well be hers, seeing that she was his: You well know, said she, that the great love which I have in you, has made me leave father and mother that I may have you in my arms day and night. All my desire and thought is in you; without you I have neither joy nor good. I have placed all my hope upon you, and I never look to have joy or good except from you. Seeing then that I love you, and you love me, is it not right that you should do my will and I yours? Certes, lady, yes, said Merlin, and I will do it; tell me what you would have. Sir, said she, I would that we should make a fair place and a suitable, so contrived by art and by cunning, that it might never be undone, and that you and I should be there in joy and in solace. My lady, said Merlin, I will perform all this. Sir, said she, I would not have you do it, but you shall teach me, and I will do it, and then it will be more to my will. I grant you this, said Merlin. Then he began to devise, and the damsel put it all in writing. And when he had devised the whole, then had the damsel full great joy, and showed him greater semblance of loving him than she had ever before made;

and they sojourned together a long while. At length it fell out that as they were going one day hand in hand through the forest of Broceliande, they found a bush of white thorn which was laden with flowers; and they seated themselves under the shade of this white thorn upon the green grass, and they disported together and took their solace, and Merlin laid his head upon the damsel's lap, and then she began to feel if he were asleep. Then the damsel rose and made a ring with her wimple round the bush and round Merlin, and began her enchantments such as he himself had taught her; and nine times she made the ring, and nine times she made the enchantment; and then she went and sate down by him, and placed his head again upon her lap; and when he awoke and looked round him, it seemed to him that he was inclosed in the strongest tower in the world, and laid upon a fair bed; then said he to the dame, My lady, you have deceived me unless you abide with me, for no one hath power to unmake this tower, save you alone. Fair friend, she replied, I shall often be here, and you shall hold me in your arms, and I will hold you in mine. And in this she held her covenant to him, for afterwards there was never night nor day in which she was not there. And Merlin never went out of that tower where his mistress Viviane had inclosed him. But she entered and went out again when she listed; and often time she regretted what she had done, for she had thought that the thing which he taught her could not be true, and willingly would she have let him out if she could." T. 2. f. 134.

The writer very properly remarks upon Merlin, for having taught his mistress so much, *quil en fut depuis, et est encore tenu pour fol.*

The disappearance of so remarkable and so useful a personage as Merlin occasioned great trouble at King Arthur's court, and many knights set out in search of him; among other was Sir Gawain, whose fortune it was, while upon this quest, to meet with one of the most extraordinary adventures that ever befell him in the course of his eventful life. For as he was riding one day through a forest, thinking of his old friend Merlin, he fell into so deep a reverie, that he did not perceive a damsel approaching upon a black palfrey, with an ivory saddle and stirrups of gold. The damsel was so angry with him for not accosting her, that she called him the most villainous knight in the world; and as a punishment for his discourtesy, told him he should resemble the first person whom he met, and continue in that resemblance till he should meet her again. This first person proved to be a good knight, who, in consequence of an unhappy

enchantment, was at this time a most deformed dwarf. Upon passing Sir Gawain he resumed his natural beauty, and poor Sir Gawain shrunk within his armour like a withered kernel in a nutshell. In this deplorable state he pursued his quest till it was time to return to court. Then turning his face homeward, and cursing his evil fortune, he came into the forest of Broceliande, lamenting as he went along. Suddenly he heard the voice of one groaning on his right hand; looking that way he could see nothing save a kind of smoke which seemed like air, and through which he could not pass; and this impediment made him so wrathful that it deprived him of speech. Presently he heard a voice which said, Gawain, Gawain, be not out of heart, for every thing which must happen will come to pass. And when he heard the voice which thus called him by his right name, he replied, Who can this be who hath spoken to me? How, said the voice, Sir Gawain, know you me not? you were wont to know me well; but thus things are interwoven, and thus the proverb says true, *esloignez la court et la court vous esloignera.* So is it with me. Whilst I served King Arthur I was well known by you and by other barons, but because I have left the court I am known no longer, and put in forgetfulness, which I ought not to be if faith reigned in the world. When Sir Gawain heard the voice which spake to him thus, he thought it was Merlin, and he answered, Sir, certes I ought to know you well, for many times have I heard your words; I pray you appear before me so that I may be able to recognize you. Ah sir, said Merlin, you will never see me more, and that grieves me, but I cannot remedy it; and when you shall have departed from this place, I shall never more speak to you nor to any other person, save only my mistress; for never other person will be able to discover this place for any thing which may befall; neither shall I ever go out from hence, for in the world there is no such strong tower as this wherein I am confined; and it is neither of wood, nor of iron, nor of stone, but of air, without any thing else; and made by enchantment so strong, that it can never be demolished while the world lasts, neither can I go out, nor can any one come in, save she who hath inclosed me here, and who keeps me company when it pleaseth her; she cometh when she listeth, for her will is here. How, Merlin, my good friend, said Sir Gawain, are you restrained so strongly that you cannot deliver yourself, nor make yourself visible unto me; how can this happen, seeing that you are the wisest man in the world? Rather, said Merlin, the greatest fool; for I well knew that all

this would befall me, and I have been fool enough to love another more than myself, for I taught my mistress that whereby she hath imprisoned me in such manner that none can set me free. Certes, Merlin, replied Sir Gawain, of that am I right sorrowful, and so will King Arthur, my uncle, be, when he shall know it, as one who is making search after you throughout all countries. Well, said Merlin, it must be borne, for never will he see me, nor I him; neither will any one speak with me again after you, it would be in vain to attempt it: for you yourself, when you have turned away, will never be able to find the place; but salute for me the king and the queen, and all the barons, and tell them of my condition. You will find the king at Carduel in Wales; and when you arrive there you will find there all the companions who departed with you, and who at this day will return. And be not discomforted because of that which hath befallen you, for you will find the damsel who cast this adventure upon you in the forest where you found her; but forget not to salute her. Sir, said Sir Gawain, that shall I not forget, if God please. Now then, said Merlin, go in the name of God, who will protect and save the King Arthur, and the realm of Logres, and you also, as the best knights who are in the world. With that Sir Gawain departed joyful and sorrowful; joyful because of what Merlin had assured him should happen unto him, and sorrowful because that Merlin had thus been lost. T. 2. f. 146.

This is the account of Merlin's fate, which, according to Miss Plumptre, is current at this time among the Bretons. Some of their traditions say, that he is still alive, enclosed in a tree by the power of a greater enchanter than himself. The exact spot no one knows for certain: though it is somewhere near his birth-place, which they affirm was in the isle of Sein, a little islet off the western coast of Bretagne, between the points of Raz and of Croissant.

Prophecies of Merlin. § X.]—The latest book upon this subject is that by Thomas Heywood, a man whose dramatic pieces contain passages of exquisite beauty, and whose other works, voluminous as they are, are nearly worthless. It is entitled "The Life of Merlin sirnamed Ambrosius. His Prophesies and Predictions interpreted; and their truth made good by our English Annalls. Being a Chronographicall History of all the Kings, and memorable passages of this Kingdome, from Brute to the Reign of our Royall Sovereigne King Charles. A Subject never pub-

lished in this kind before, and deserves to be knowne and observed by all men.

Quotque aderant vates, rebar adesse Deos.

London: Printed by J. Okes, and are to be sold by Jasper Emery in Pauls Church-yard, at the signe of the Eagle and Child, neare St. Austins Gate. 1641." (Small 4to.)

"Courteous and considerate reader," says Heywood, "I have here exposed to thy especiall perusall, the life and prophesies of our famous predictor Merlinus, sirnamed Ambrosius, who though he lived in the time of profane paganisme, was a professed Christian, and therefore his auguries the better to be approved and allowed.—Scarce any thing shall be here wanting to thy best wishes, if thou beest desirous to be instructed and faithfully informed in the knowledge of our English Annalls: For in the steed of a large study book, and huge voluminous Tractate, able to take up a whole year in reading, and to load and tyre a porter in carrying, thou hast here a small Manuell, containing all the pith and marrow of the greater, made portable for thee (if so thou please) to bear in thy pocket, so that thou mayst say, that in this small compendium or abstract thou hast Hollinshed, Polychronicon, Fabian, Speed, or any of the rest, of more giant-like bulk or binding; to which my short Abbreviary, I strive to make this my Prologue or Preface to thee alike sutable, being as succinct and briefly contrived, as the former summarily comprehended, desiring thee to read considerately, and withall to censure charitably, and so (without further compliment) wishing thy care in the one and courtesy in the other, with a favourable pardon of some few errors committed in the press, I bid thee farewell."

This is a serious and dull attempt to trace the fulfilment of Merlin's prophecies in the course of English history! The most amusing passage which it contains is an invention of his own fancy—for I believe it is not to be found elsewhere.

"As Merlin was plentifully indued with the spirit of divination, so by some authours it is affirmed of him that hee was skilful in dark and hidden arts, as magick, necromancy, and the like, and they relate of him, that when King Vortigen lived solitary in his late erected castle, forsaken of the greatest part of his followers and friends, and quite sequestered from all kingly honours, hee grew into a deepe and dumpish melancholy, delighting onely (if any delight can be taken therein) in solitude and want of

company, to expell which sad fits from him, which might bee dangerous to impaire his health, he would devise for his recreation and disport many pleasant fancies to beget mirth and sometimes laughter, by solacing his eare with severall strains of musique both courtly and rurall; the sound heard, but the persons not seen; as with the harpe, bag-pipes, cimball, and tabret; and sometimes again with the lute, orphorian, viall, sackbut, cornet, and organs; then to recreate his eye, hee would present him with stately masques and anti-masques; and againe, for variety sake, with rustick dances presented by swains and shepherdeses: and where these grew any thing stale or tedious to his eye or eare, he would take him up into the top of one of his turrets, whereon hee should see eagles and hawkes fly after sundry games, and what fowle the king liked they would strike it into his lap, to add unto his slender provision for dinner and supper, which gave the king no small contentment.

"Sometimes hee would have an hare, or hart hunted and chased by a pack of dogges in the ayre, the game flying, the hounds with open and audible mouthes pursuing, with huntsmen winding their hornes, and following the chace with all the indents and turnings, losses and recoveries, the champaigne plaines, the woods, and coverts appearing as visible and naturall as if the sport had beene upon the firme and solid earth.

"Upon a time being in the king's summer parlour, who was desirous to bee partaker of some novelty which hee had never seene, there instantly appeared upon the table a paire of butts, and whites in the middle to shoote at, when suddenly came in sixe dapper and pert fellows like archers, in stature not above a foot high, and all other members accordingly proportioned; their bowes were of the side bones of an overgrowne pike, their strings of a small slevy silk, no bigger than the thread of a cobweb, their arrows less then pick-tooths, feathered with the wings of small flyes, and headed with the points of *Spanish* needles, who made a shew as if they were to shoote a match three to three, and roundly they went about it: in the middle of the game, there was a shot which rested doubtfull, which as it appeared, the gamesters could not well decide: then *Merlin* called to one of the servants (who had something a big nose) that stood by, and bade him measure to the marke, and give it to the best: To which whilst he stooped, and inclined his face, the better to umpire the matter, one of these pigmey archers who had an arrow to shoote delivered it from his bow, and shot him quite through the nose,

at which he started, and the king heartily laughed, (for there was no room to be seene); and the butts with the archers together disappeared." Heywood's Life of Merlin, page 27.

It has evidently been written at very different times, and with very different purposes. § X.]—There is a curious passage upon this subject in the *Cronica del Conde Don Pero Niño:* it occurs in the advice given him by his tutor. The good Fidalgo, to whose care he was entrusted, says, "Take heed that you believe not in false prophecies, nor place confidence in them, such as those of Merlin and others; for I tell you a truth, these things have been invented and forged by designing and crafty men, to obtain favour with kings and great lords, and to get riches from them, and have them at their pleasure by means of the vain belief which they made their profit. And if you examine into the matter, you will find that when a new king comes, forthwith they make a new Merlin: they say that this king is to cross the sea, and destroy the whole Morisma (the collective body of the Mahommedans) and win the Holy Sepulchre, and be made emperor; and afterwards we see that what God pleases comes to pass. Thus they have said of the kings who are past, and thus they will say of those who are to come. That which God was not pleased to reveal to his chosen servant, sinners pretend to know. The true prophets spake only with relation to the two comings of Jesus Christ, his first coming in humility and poverty, his second in power and majesty. And farther they are all silent, for after the coming of Christ they are not necessary. Merlin was a good man, and a right wise. He was not the son of the devil, as some affirm; for the devil, who is a spirit, cannot engender children: he may provoke actions which are sinful, for this is his office. He is an incorporeal substance; he cannot engender what is corporeal. But Merlin, with the great science which he had acquired, wished to know more than behoved, and he was deceived by the devil, who told him many things that he should say, and some of these proved true; for this is the manner of the devil, and indeed of every one who practises deceit; to bring forward some truth which may be believed by him whom he seeks to entrap. Thus yonder in England he said some things which were found to have some truth in them; but in many others he failed; and persons now who wish to say certain things of this kind invent them, and say that they were spoken by Merlin." P. 29—30.

The practice of inventing prophecies was carried on with singular

industry by the Braganzan party during the Spanish usurpation of Portugal, and gave rise to the Sebastianists.

Merlin gives a bad character of the French. *Sachez que pour leur necessite et pour leur orgueil seront mauvaisement aymez parmy le monde a celuy temps.* And again he speaks of *leur chetive nation*, and of *celuy mauvais sang quilz auront dedans leur ventre.* Prophecies, f. 13.

Lancelot. § XI.]—Our Cymric antiquaries make, I believe, no claim to Sir Lancelot, either historical or mythological. Whitaker of Manchester, however, makes out a history for him. The name of Lancelot, he says, " is an appellative truly British, and significative of royalty; Lance being a Celtic term for a spear (Diodorus, p. 353. and Varro, Durdrecht, 1609. p. 25. Fragmenta) and Leod, Lod, or Lot, importing a people. He was therefore a British sovereign.—(*Therefore!*) And since he is denominated Lancelot of the Lake, perhaps he resided at Coccium in the region Linuis, and was the monarch of Lancashire; as the kings of the Creones, living at Selma in the forest of Morven, are generally denominated sovereigns of Morven (!) or more probably was king of Cheshire, and resided at Pool-ton Lancelot in the hundred of Wirrall." Hist. of Manchester, vol. 2. 51.

Thomas of Ercildoune. § XII.]—The Tristran of Gotfret von Strazburc, which the Germans refer to the 13th century, appeals to this poet as its original. I quote the passage for the use of those who can understand it: the task is not facilitated by the preposterous manner in which this collection of German romances has been printed, with a full stop at the end of every line, and no other punctuation.

Ich weiz wol ir ist vil gewesen.
di von Tristande han gelesen.
und ist ir doch niht vil gewesen
di von im rehte haben gelesen.
tun aber ich di glich nu.
und schephe mine wort dar zu.
daz mir ir igliches sage.
von disem mere missehage.
so wirb ich anders dan ich sol.
ich entun es niht si sprachen wol

und niht wen uz edelem mute.
mir und der werlde ze gute.
bi namen si ratin es in gut.
und swas der man in gute tut.
das ist ouch gut und wol getan.
aber als ich gesprochen han.
daz si niht rehte haben gelesen.
daz ist als ich uch sage gewesen.
sin sprachen inder rihte niht.
als Thomas van Britanie giht.
der aventure meistr was.
und an britunschin buechen las.
aller der lantheren leben.
und ez uns zechunde har geben.
Als der von Tristrande seit.
di rihte und di warheit.
begonde ich sere suchen.
in beider hande buchen.
welshin und latinen.
und begonde mich des pinen.
daz ich in siner rihte.
rihte dise tihte.
sur treib ich menige suche.
unz ich an einem buche.
alle sine iche gelas.
wie dirre aventure was.

Welshin probably means French. There are some parts of Germany wherein this name is still applied to the French, and others in which it is used for the Italians.

Tristram, a mythological character. § XII.]—By the character of *Trystan*, Mr. Davies says, we are to understand, as his name imports, a *herald* of mysteries. He is *the proclaimer*, the son of *Tallwch*, the *overwhelming*—that is, the deluge! King *March* is a *horse*; "*Essylt*, whose name, spectacle, or *subject of steady contemplation*, manifestly implies some mystical exhibition, was the wife of the *horse*, so she is described as having a *white mane*. She was therefore a mare." And as "Mr. Bryant acknowledges

Hippa, the mare, as one of the most ancient goddesses of the Gentile world, and particularly informs us that the Arkite Ceres was distinguished by that title, and her priestesses were called Hippai mares;" it follows the romance of Tristram is an Arkite story, and that his adulterous and incestuous intercourse with Essylt alludes to "the incorporation of the primitive religion of the Britons with the rites of the Phœnician cow!—What can be wilder than all this? But Mr. Davies is not the only learned man who has followed an hypothesis like a will of the wisp, wherever it would lead him.

Meliadus. § XIII.]—The following passage from the beginning of this Romance pretends to give much bibliographical information.

"Bien est verite que aucuns preudhommes clercs se sont ja entremis de translater ce livre de latin en langue Francoyse. Premier messire Luces du Jauqui fut le premier chevalier qui de ce sentremist, & que son estude y mist & sa cure; aussi translata en langue Francoyse une partie de lhystoire de monseigneur Tristan & moins assez que il ne deust. Moult commenca bien son livre, & si ny mist tous les faictz de monseigneur Tristan, ains la greigneur partie. Apres sen entremist messire Gasses le blonc qui estoit parent au Roy Henry, & devisa lhystoire de Lancelot du lac; et dautre chose ne parla il mie grandement en son livre. Messire Robert de borron sen entremist & Helye de borron par la priere dudit messire Robert de borron, & pource que compaignons feusmes darmes longuement, je commencay mon livre du brut. Et quant je leuz mene jusques a la fin, ainsi comme il appert encores, le roy Henry a qui mon livre eust tant pleu comme jay compte, quant il eust regarde des le commencement jusques a la fin, pource quil avoit ouy tous les aultres livres qui du livre du sainct Graal estoient extraitz en Francoys devant luy, & le mien & les aultres les avoit tous & encores nestoient mie du tout les livres de latin en francois translatez, ains en estoit demoure a translater une grant partie: pource voulut il que je mentremisse a mon povoir de mener a fin ce que es aultres livres deffailloit."

There is a passage of the same kind at the beginning of Gyron.

"Seigneurs, Empereurs, Roys, Princes, Ducs, Contes, Barons, Chevaliers, Vicontes, Bourgeois, et tous les preudhommes de cestuy monde qui talent avez et desir de vous delecter en rommans, prenez cestuy cy, et le faictes lire de chief en chief, si orrez partie de toutes les grandes advantures qui advindrent jadis aux chevaliers errans du temps du Roy Uterpendragon et du temps du Roy Artus son filz. Et saichez tout vrayement que cestuy livre fut translate du

livre de Monseigneur Edouart le Roy dangleterre en celluy temps que il passa oultre la mer, au service de nostre seigneur pour conquester le saint sepulchre. Et maistre Rusticiens de Puise compila ce rommant. Car dicellui livre au Roy Edouart dangleterre translata il toutes les merveilleuses advantures qui sont en cestuy livre."

In Gyron le Courtoys Spenser probably found the original of his Braggadochio. § XIV.] Hennor de la Selve is the name of this hero. Spenser has not gone to the same source for his Knight of Courtesy. Calidore appears to be his own creation.

A writer in the British Bibliographer (No. 13. p. 159.) has asserted that "in vain would any person search for the Florizel of the Winter's Tale in Amadis of Greece," and therefore that Mr. Southey "is hardly warranted in stating that Shakespear had imitated this romance."

I give this writer more credit for accuracy than he has given me. He has used the French translation, and according to that translation is, I dare say, justified in his assertion;—but a reference to the original would have shewn him that I am perfectly accurate in mine. The latter chapters relate to the loves of Florisel and Silvia; and these the French translator may probably have removed to the ninth book of the series.

Sidney and Spenser may both be traced to the romance of Florisel de Niquea, as well as to Amadis of Greece. The mock execution which is exhibited before Pamela will be found Book 1. ch. 14. of the original Spanish; and the origin of Amoret in her sufferings, Book 2. ch. 5.

Hyperboles in Gyron le Courtoys coneerning the elder knights. § XIV.] The most extravagant of these stories relate to Febus, Gyron's great grandfather: perhaps the phrase which the French apply to a style of extravagant bombast may have originated from this exaggerated character.

Perlevaulx. § XV.] Two etymologies are given of this name: they are equally ridiculous.

"*On lappelloit Perlevaulx, mais le bon hermite son oncle luy avoit mis a nom* Parluyfait *pour ce quel cestoit fait par lui mesmes.*"—Sainct Greall, 2. f. 149.

"*Beau filz vous avez nom* Perlevaulx *pource que avant que fussez ne, il*

(*le Sire des Maretz*) *commenca a tollir ceste terre a vostre pere, & ja luy avoit prins les vaulx de Kamelot, & pource que vostre pere avoit perdu ses vaulx il voulut que fussez appelle* Perlevaulx."—Sainct Greall, 2. f. 169.

The dialect of Picardy, in which some writers have supposed that Amadis of Gaul was originally written. § XVI.] There is the most conclusive evidence, internal and external, that this famous romance was written in Portugueze. The only ground for a different opinion is an assertion of D'Herberay, who remembered he had seen a MS. of it in the Picard dialect, supported by Tressan, who is almost sure that he had seen this MS. not in the Picard but in Romance, among Queen Christina's books in the Vatican.

That Lobeira's work should have been translated at the court of Burgundy is exceedingly probable, a princess of Portugal having married Philip the Good. There was a Portugueze at that court, by name Vaz de Lucena, who might very probably have made this translation among his other works. Olivier de la Marche regrets that he has not "*par don de grace, la clergie, la memoire, ou l'entendement, de ce vertueux Escuyer, Vas de Lusane, Portugalois, à present echanson de Madame Marguerite d'Angleterre, Duchesse Douairière de Bourgongue; lequel a fait tant d'œuvres, translations et autres biens, dignes de memoire, qu'il fait aujourdhuy à estimer entre les sachans, les experimentes, et les recommandes de nostre temps.*"—Introduction, *p.* 5.

Was the Morte Arthur compiled in French or in English? § XVII.] —A passage in the beginning of the sixth book implies that the compilation was in French, and Sir Thomas Malory only the translator.— "Sir Launcelot increased marvellously in worship and in honour, therefore he is the first knight *that the French book maketh mention of after King Arthur came from Rome.*"

The title also appears to warrant a like inference. I believe all the poems with a French title which are printed with Chaucer's works are translations from that language.

Nuno Alvarez Pereira. § XVII.]—Francisco Rodriguez Lobo says, in the Corte na Aldea, "There was a brave captain in Portugal, better than whom Rome never produced, who, by imitating a knight of romance, and copying the virtues which were written of him, became the greatest

of his time." This passage alludes to Nuno Alvarez, upon whose exploits Lobo has written a poem in 20 cantos: and there he relates the fact.

Lia neste exercicio costumado
  Huma historia na lingoa Portugueza,
Do casto Dom Galaz, claro, esforçado,
  Honra e valor da antigua corte Ingreza,
Vitorioso sempre e celebrado
  Pollas prerogativas da pureza,
Tanto a virtude mais se inclina
Que ate a morte ser casto determina.

Quanto he devido aos claros escritores
  O louvor que esta idade nam consente,
Que debaxo de escuros e de cores,
  As virtudes ensinam sabiamente:
Entre o doce da honra e dos louvores
  Que he isca popular que ceva a gente,
A gloria, e fama os animos excitam
Dispoem, ordenam, movem, facilitam.

A que honra nam move huma lembrança
  Dos valerosos feitos dos passados?
Que nam conceba em si nova esperança
  De os seus serem no mundo celebrados;
A quem nam envergonha e faz mudança,
  E inveja honrosa o vellos recontados,
Se inda huma historia vãa, mas bem fingida;
Move hum animo illustre a santa vida.

O Condestabre de Portugal, f. 19.

Lobo perhaps had seen the romance, as he states it to be written in Portugueze;—the fact he found in the Chronicle of Nuno Alvarez, where this book is said to have been a summary of the Round Table History—like the Morte Arthur. The passage is as follows:

Avia gram sabor, e usava muyto de ouvir e leer livros destorias, especialmente usava mais leer a estoria de Galaaz em que se continha a soma da

Tavola Redonda. E porque em ella achava que por virtude de virgindade que em elle ouve, e em que perseverou Galaaz, acabara muytos grandes e notavees feytos, que outros nom poderom acabar; e elle desejava muyto de o parecer em alguma guisa, e muytas vezes em sy cuydava de seer virgem, se a Deos prouvesse; e por esto elle era mui afastado de que lhe seu padre fallara em feyto de casamento.—Coronica do Condestabre, Cap. 4.

The present edition. § XVIII.]—It may perhaps not be improper to remark that the present edition was projected and undertaken by a gentleman, who, for reasons which it is not necessary to explain, withdrew from the undertaking. The present editor is not responsible for the mechanical part; nor is it to be supposed, that under any circumstances he would have undertaken such a responsibility; but he knows that neither expense nor care have been spared to render it minutely accurate. The superintendence of the press was undertaken by Mr. Upcott of the London Institution; and the reprint is rendered as exact as possible, there being no other alteration than that of the type.

Chivalry was in its noon-day glory under Edward III. § XIX.]—A remarkable instance of Edward's wide-spread reputation as the patron of chivalry is related by Joshua Barnes in his history of that prince. "Now it is to be noted, that in these days (1350) there was hot war between the Soldan of Babylon and Constantine, King of Armenia, the former invading the King of Armenia's dominions with vast and numerous armies, and the latter endeavouring by the united strength of his own subjects, the Cypriotes and Rhodians, to repel the violence of the said heathen invaders, or at least to stop their progress, which then began to threaten all Christendom. Among the several great men, who together with the Christian princes were engaged in this holy war, whereof Hugh, the valiant King of Cyprus, was the most notable, there was a Cypriote knight, named John de Vesconti, of the King of Cyprus his blood, and a knight of France, called Thomas de la Marche, bastard brother to John de Valois, the French king; both who had a considerable command in the Christian army. It so fell out, that John de Vesconti laid flat treason to the charge of the bastard of France, namely, that he had secretly appointed, in consideration of a certain sum of gold, to be paid unto him beforehand, in part of a greater sum to be paid afterward, to betray the Christian army to the Turks. The defendant

strenuously denied the charge, which the appellant as eagerly urged; but there was no other proof on either side, save only their single asseverations. Whereupon a challenge being denounced and accepted between the parties, the Christian captains, fearing either to displease the King of Cyprus, or the King of France, to whom they were allied; or at least doubting some dissention might happen thereupon among themselves by reason of part-taking on either side, made them both swear to stand to their award, as it should be determined by the confederates in council. The judgment was, that they should take and carry letters, importing their cause fully and clearly, from the said Christian princes unto King Edward of England, and to submit themselves to be tried by combat before him, as the most worthy and honourable prince in all Christendom, they swearing to remain as perfect friends until that time.

"As it was determined, so these generous knights performed, and came into England in the beginning of September, and forthwith presented their letters unto King Edward in the names of the Kings of Armenia and Cyprus, and the rest of the princes and captains of the Christians, containing the whole difference between them, and that they were to determine the matter by combat before him, as their judge. And then again Sir John de Vesconti openly before the king began to accuse Sir Thomas de la Marche of the treasonable intent and purpose aforesaid, challenging to prove it upon his body, and thereupon flung down his gauntlet; which the said Sir Thomas as boldly took up, and accepted the challenge in proof of his innocency. King Edward having read the letters, and seriously considered the whole matter, set them a day, namely, the fourth of October, being the Monday after St. Michael, wherein to decide their quarrel in close field within the lists at his palace of Westminster. On the day appointed they met accordingly, armed at all points, on horseback, the King, the Prince of Wales, and the whole court of England being spectators. There presently, upon sound of trumpet, began a most gallant combat between these two gentlemen, for at the tilt both their spears brake on each other's shield, yet neither of them was moved from his saddle; wherefore, as it were by consent, they both alighted at one instant, and renewed the combat on foot, till, having, with equal valour and discretion, fought a considerable while, both their weapons were rendered useless, and they were obliged to come to close grapple, till, by wrestling, both fell locked together, still contending for the victory. Now the visors of both their helmets were

defended before with small distant bars of steel, through which they might see and breathe more freely, all the rest of their bodies being wholly covered with armour: wherefore Sir Thomas de la Marche, the knight of France, who only of the two had certain short but sharp pricks of steel, called gadlings *, enclosed in the joints of his right gauntlet, struck therewith at the visor of Sir John de Vesconti, as often as he could come at him, and grievously tormented him in the face; insomuch, that being himself unprovided of the like gadlings, he was forced through extremity of pain to cry out aloud, as one that could not help himself. At that, King Edward flang down his wardour, and the marshal cried *ho*, and so the combat ceased; the King adjudging the victory to the Frenchman, and the vanquished to be at his mercy according to the law of arms." Barnes.

Tournament. § XX.]—Tournaments were more dangerous in France than in Spain, but only because they were more disorderly.

"The French," says the chronicler of Pero Nino, "joust in a different guise from what they do in Spain, *justan sin tela à manera de guerra por el topar* (if I understand this passage rightly, it means that they encounter as they would do in actual war, the difference being only in the point of the weapon.) They arm the horses with head pieces and breastings of leather, which are very strong, and the saddles are full strong, and cover the leg almost down to the foot. It often happens that the horses encounter and both fall; or one falls, and presently the other. It is a perilous manner of jousting, all men do not attempt it, but such as are expert, and right good horsemen. The lances are all measured, only one or two masters in the court make them, and this with license from the governor, *é aquel es el fiel*, and upon their warrantry they are taken. There is no maintainer of the lists there, nor does one single out another for jousting, but jousts with whomsoever he can meet. All are knights adventurers, ten, or twenty, or thirty, or more arrange themselves on one side, and as many on the other. When one takes a spear, another has his ready, and not one alone comes against him; but it happens in their eagerness that two or even three start, notwithstanding their courtesy, for if they perceived it, not more than one would advance. The knight therefore who jousts there had need be well practised, and strong, and a great horseman." P. 129.

* Ab Anglo-Sax. Gadd, massa chalybis. Walsing. p. 160. n. 25. Stow, p. 250. b. n. 56. Holinshed, 945. b. n. 20.

At a tournament held at Valladolid in 1428, the King of Castille had twelve knights with him, who personated—the twelve Apostles. The twelve Apostles taking part in a tournament! "He exerted himself in his own person, and did good things in that sport, he and his companions against more than an hundred knights, who had much trouble with them, for they gave enough to do with all, and had with them as many careers as they chose. And because the truth ought not to be concealed, but should be written and kept in remembrance, Pero Niño was one of the twelve knights who were made in memory of the twelve apostles, and he was called St. Paul!" *Croneca del Conde D. Pero Nino*, p. 203.

After this, the reader will not be surprised by the following poem, addressed to St. Peter. Antonio Perez is the author, and it is transcribed from the Cancioneiro General, f. 194.

Vos preciosa piedra entera
hallada para fundar,
fuestes quien Dios quiso dar
su mismo yelmo y cimera,
acabando el de justar;
dio os la cruz que fue su lança,
hizos su mantenedor,
pues que santo aquesto alcança,
y llevays de justador
la fe por mas alabança.

Con esta fe que ganastes
en esta justa de guerra,
con ella misma tornastes,
y nuevamente justastes,
y ganastes cielo y tierra:
distes tan rezio el encuentro
que vuestra lança se mete
toda hasta el fin del centro,
llevo visera y almete
saco la llave de dentro.

Ya que ovistes bien justado
Dios sacratissimo padre

viendo lo que aveys ganado,
desposo os con nuestra madre
y assi quedastes casado.

Canc. Gen. f. 194.

The prowess of the knights of romance not greatly exaggerated. § XX.] —K. Arthur has related to the Bon Chevalier sans paour, how K. Meliadus by his single prowess rescued him from twenty knights, who were leading him away prisoner. "*Quant le roy Artus eut fine son compte le bon chevalier sans paour parle adoncques, & dit au roy Artus, Sire ainsi va il des adventures du monde, chascun fait ce quil peult, puis que ce vient au grant besoing. Sire si dieu vous doint bonne adventure, vous semble il que ce feust grant fait a cestuy que le feist? Sire, dist le roy Artus, se maist dieu il me semble que ce fut grant fait, & moult perilleux a entreprendre, & non mie seullement grant, mais trop grant. Sire, fait le bon chevalier sans paour, si dieu me doint bonne adventure je vous tiens pour le present pour le plus sage homme du monde, & pour le plus sage prince que soit pour le present en tout le monde de vostre aage, mais ce dire je ne vous tiens mie pour sage. Qui mettroit vingt aigneaulx dune part seulement, & mist on ung lyon entre eulx, si le lyon les mettoit a mort, & les devoroit, luy tourneroit on a prouesse? Nenny, certes, dit le roy Artus. Sire de ceste partie vous veulx je mesmes dire, vous veistes en une place encontre ung lyon des aigneaulx; car bien sachez tout certainement de celluy de quoy vous parlez entre tous les autres chevaliers, celuy fut moult petit faict de mettre vingt chevaliers encontre luy; car ce ne luy estancha gueres sa fain, ce ne luy fut que une goulee.*" Meliadus, ch. 51. f. 77.

"When King Arthur had finished his tale, the good knight without fear spake then, and said to King Arthur, Sir, thus it goes with the adventures of the world, every one does what he can when it comes to a matter of need. Sir, as God may give you good adventure, does it appear to you that this was a great feat for him who did it? Sir, said King Arthur, as God shall have me, it seems to me that it was a great feat, and full perilous to undertake; and not only great, but too great. Sir, said the good knight without fear, as God may give me good adventure, I hold you at present for the wisest man in the world, and for the wisest prince at this time in all the world of your age, but this saying I do not hold for wise. For put twenty lambs on one part, and set one single lion among them, if the lion put them to death and devoured them, would it be accounted for prowess? Certes not, said King Arthur. Sir, I will

say the same to you of this affair: ye see lambs against a lion: for be assured of him of whom you speak, among all other knights, it is a little thing to set twenty knights against him; for it would not appease his hunger, it would be only a mouthful."

Pleasant however as the manners of chivalry might be for one of the lion race, there is some good sense in what Kehedin said to Palamedes, when that good knight proposed that he should bear him company, and seek adventures in the realm of Logres. "*Sire, faict Kehedin, grant mercy, mais de ce que vous dictes que je voise avec vous cherchant les advantures du royaulme de Logres mest il advis que vous maymez; mais cest petit; car ce nest pas feste de faire tel mestier, car vous que estes ung des bons chevalliers du monde, ne povez gueres trouver plus fort que vous, et moy qui suis ung si foyble homme comme pourrois je avec vous ce jeu fournir. Je ne voy pas, si Dieu me sault, es batailles du royaulme de Logres si grant prouffit que je nayme mieulx ma peau saine que rompue despees et de glayves, je vous clame quitte les advantures du royaulme de Logres. Car je voy bien que le greigneur gaing qui y soit cest de batre, occire et mehaigner lung lautre, pour ce ne me semble il pas beau, Je nayme pas le pays ou les chevaliers par coustume quant ilz sentretreuvent et ilz sentredeuroyent saluer, et ilz sentreabatent et occient; oncques mais ne ouys parler de tel salut. Dieu me gard de telles accointances!*" Tristan, f. 109.

"Gramercy, Sir, cried Kehedin; by what you say that I should go with you seeking adventures in the kingdom of Logres, I perceive you love me; but it is but little; for it is no holyday to carry on such a business. You who are one of the good knights of the world, cannot find a stronger than yourself; and I who am so weak a man, how can I keep up the game with you? As God shall save me, I see no such great profit in the battles of the kingdom of Logres that I should not rather have my skin whole, than broken with swords and spears. I cry quit to you for the adventures of the kingdom of Logres. For I plainly see that the greatest gain there, is to beat, and kill, and maim one another; and therefore it likes me not. I do not love a country where when knights meet, and ought to salute, they encounter and fight and kill one another. I never heard of such kind of salutation. God keep me from such acquaintances!"

MORTE DARTHUR.

FTER that I had accomplysshed and fynysshed dyuers hystoryes as wel of contemplacyon as of other hystoryal and worldly actes of grete conquerours & prynces. And also certeyn bookes of ensaumples and doctryne. Many noble and dyuers gentylmen of thys royame of Englond camen and demaunded me many and oftymes, wherfore that I haue not do made & enprynte the noble hystorye of the saynt greal, and of the moost renomed cryſten Kyng. Fyrst and chyef of the thre best crysten and worthy, kyng Arthur, whyche ought moost to be remembred emonge vs englysshe men tofore al other crysten kynges. For it is notoyrly knowen thorugh the vnyuersal world, that there been ix worthy & the best that euer were. That is to wete thre paynyms, thre Jewes and thre crysten men. As for the paynyms they were tofore the Incarnacyon of Cryst, whiche were named, the fyrst Hector of Troye, of whome thystorye is comen bothe in balade and in prose. The second Alysaunder the grete, & the thyrd Julyus Cezar Emperour of Rome of whome thystoryes ben wel kno and had. And as for the thre Jewes whyche also were tofore thyncarnacyon of our lord of whome the fyrst was Duc Josue whyche brought the chyldren of Israhel in to the londe of byheste. The second Dauyd kyng of Jherusalem, & the thyrd Judas Machabeus of these thre the byble reherceth al theyr noble hystoryes & actes. And sythe the sayd Incarnacyon haue ben thre noble crysten men stalled and admytted thorugh the vnyuersal world in to the nombre of the ix beste & worthy, of whome

was fyrst the noble Arthur, whos noble actes I purpose to wryte in thys present book here folowyng. The second was Charlemayn or Charles the grete, of whome thystorye is had in many places bothe in frensshe and englysshe, and the thyrd and last was Godefray of boloyn, of whos actes & lyf I made a book vnto thexcellent prynce and kyng of noble memorye kyng Edward the fourth, the sayd noble Jentylmen instantly requyred me temprynte thystorye of the sayd noble kyng and conquerour kyng Arthur, and of his knyghtes wyth thystorye of the saynt greal, and of the deth and endyng of the sayd Arthur. Affermyng that I ouzt rather tenprynte his actes and noble feates, than of godefroye of boloyne, or ony of the other eyght, consyderyng that he was a man borne wythin this royame and kyng and Emperour of the same.

And that there ben in frensshe dyuers and many noble volumes of his actes, and also of his knyghtes. To whome I answerd, that dyuers men holde oppynyon, that there was no suche Arthur, and that alle suche bookes as been maad of hym, ben but fayned and fables, by cause that somme cronycles make of hym no mencyon ne remembre hym noo thynge ne of his knyghtes. Wherto they answerd, and one in specyal sayd, that in hym that shold say or thynke, that there was neuer suche a kyng callyd Arthur, myght wel be aretted grete folye and blyndenesse. For he sayd that there were many euydences of the contrarye. Fyrst ye may see his sepulture in the monasterye of Glastyngburye. And also in polycronycon in the v book the syxte chappytre, and in the seuenth book the xxiii chappytre, where his body was buryed and after founden and translated in to the sayd monasterye, ye shal se also in thystorye of bochas in his book *de casu principum*, parte of his noble actes, and also of his falle. Also galfrydus in his brutysshe book recounteth his lyf, and in diuers places of Englond, many remembraunces ben yet of hym and shall remayne perpetuelly, and also of his knyghtes. Fyrst in the abbey of Westmestre at saynt Edwardes shryne remayneth the prynte of his seal in reed waxe closed in beryll. In whych is wryton *Patricius Arthurus, Britannie, Gallie, Germanie, dacie, Imperator.* Item in the castel of douer ye may see Gauwayns skulle, & Cradoks mantel. At Wynchester the rounde table, in other places Launce-

lottes swerde and many other thynges. Thenne al these thynges consydered there can no man resonably gaynsaye but there was a kyng of thys lande named Arthur. For in al places crysten and hethen he is reputed and taken for one of the ix worthy. And the fyrst of the thre Crysten men. And also he is more spoken of beyonde the see moo bookes made of his noble actes than there be in englond as wel in duche ytalyen spanysshe and grekysshe as in frensshe. And yet of record remayne in wytnesse of hym in Wales in the toune of Camelot the grete stones & meruayllous werkys of yron lyeng vnder the grounde & ryal vautes which dyuers now lyuyng hath seen. Wherfor it is a meruayl why he is no more renomed in his owne contreye, sauf onelye it accordeth to the word of god, whyche sayth that no man is accept for a prophete in his owne contreye. Thene al these thynges forsayd aledged I coude not wel denye, but that there was suche a noble kyng named arthur, and reputed one of the ix worthy, & fyrst & chyef of the cristen men, & many noble volumes be made of hym & of his noble knyztes in frensshe which I haue seen & redde beyonde the see, which been not had in our maternal tongue, but in walsshe ben many & also in frensshe, & somme in englysshe but no wher nygh alle. Wherfore suche as haue late ben drawen oute bryefly in to englysshe, I haue after the symple connyng that god hath sente to me, vnder the fauour and correctyon of al noble lordes and gentylmen enprysed to enprynte a book of the noble hystoryes of the sayd kynge Arthur, and of certeyn of his knyghtes after a copye vnto me delyuerd, whyche copye Syr Thomas Malorye dyd take oute of certeyn bookes of frensshe and reduced it in to Englysshe. And I accordyng to my copye haue doon sette it in enprynte, to the entente that noble men may see and lerne the noble acts of chyualrye, the jentyl and vertuous dedes that somme knyghtes vsed in tho dayes, by whyche they came to honour, and how they that were vycious were punysshed and ofte put to shame and rebuke, humbly bysechyng al noble lordes and ladyes wyth al other estates of what estate or degree they been of, that shal see and rede in this sayd book and werke, that they take the good and honest actes in their remembraunce, and to folowe the same. Wherin they shalle

fynde many joyous and playsaunt hystoryes, and noble & renomed actes of humanyte, gentylnesse and chyualryes. For herein may be seen noble chyualrye, Curtosye, Humanyte, frendlynesse, hardynesse, loue, frendshyp, Cowardyse, Murdre, hate, vertue, and synne. Doo after the good and leue the euyl, and it shal brynge you to good fame and renommee. And for to passe the tyme this book shal be plesaunte to rede in, but for to gyue fayth and byleue that al is trewe that is conteyned herin, ye be at your lyberte, but al is wryton for our doctryne, and for to beware that we falle not to vyce ne synne, but exercyse and folowe vertu, by whyche we may come and atteyne to good fame and renomme in thys lyf, and after thys shorte and transytorye lyf to come vnto euerlastyng blysse in heuen, the whyche he graunt vs that reygneth in heuen the blessyd Trynyte. Amen.

HENNE to procede forth in thys sayd book, whyche I dyrecte vnto alle noble prynces, lordes and ladyes, gentylmen or gentylwymmen that desyre to rede or here redde of the noble and joyous hystorye of the grete conquerour and excellent kyng, Kyng Arthur, somtyme kyng of thys noble royalme, thenne callyd brytaygne. I Wyllyam Caxton symple persone present thys book folowyng, whyche I haue enprysed tenprynte. And treateth of the noble actes, feates of armes of chyualrye, prowesse, hardynesse, humanyte, loue, curtosye and veray gentylnesse, wyth many wonderful hystoryes and aduentures. And for to vnderstonde bryefly the contente of thys volume, I haue deuyded it in to xxi bookes, and every book chapytred as here after shal by goddes grace folowe. The fyrst book shal treate how Vtherpendragon gate the noble conquerour kyng Arthur and conteyneth xxviii chappytres. The second book treateth of Balyn the noble knyght and conteyneth xix chapytres. The thyrd book treateth of the maryage of kyng Arthur to quene gueneuer wyth other maters and conteyneth fyftene chappytres. The fourth book how Merlyn was assotted, and of warre maad to kyng Arthur, and conteyneth xxix chappytres. The fyfthe book treateth of the conqueste of Lucius themperour and conteyneth xii chappytres. The syxthe book treateth of Syr Launcelot and syr Lyonel and meruayllous aduentures and conteyneth xviii chapytres. The seuenth book treateth of a noble knyght called syr Gareth and named by syr kaye Beaumayns and conteyneth xxxvi chapytres. The eyght book treateth

of the byrthe of Syr Trystram the noble knyght and of hys actes, and conteyneth xli chapytres. The ix book treateth of a knyght named by Syr kaye le cote male taylle and also of Syr Trystram and conteyneth xliiii chapytres. The x book treateth of syr Trystram & other meruayllous aduentures and conteyneth lxxxviii chappytres. The xi book treateth of syr Launcelot and syr Galahad and conteyneth xiiii chappytres. The xii book treateth of syr Launcelot and his madnesse and conteyneth xiiii chappytres. The xiii book treateth how galahad came fyrst to kyng Arthurs courte and the quest how the sangreall was begonne and conteyneth xx Chapytres. The xiiii book treateth of the queste of the sangreal & conteyneth x chapytres. The xv book treateth of syr launcelot & conteyneth vi chapytres. The xvi book treateth of Syr Bors & syr Lyonel his brother and conteyneth xvii chapytres. The xvii book treateth of the sangreal and conteyneth xxiii chapytres. The xviii book treateth of Syr Launcelot and the quene and conteyneth xxv chapytres. The xix book treateth of quene Gueneuer and Launcelot and conteyneth xiii chapytres. The xx book treateth of the pyetous deth of Arthur and conteyneth xxii chapytres. The xxi book treateth of his last departyng, and how syr Launcelot came to reuenge his dethe and conteyneth xiii chapytres. The somme is xxi bookes whyche conteyne the somme of v honderd & vii chapytres, as more playnly shal folowe herafter.

THE

TABLE OR RUBRYSSHE

OF THE

CONTENTE OF CHAPYTRES

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How Vtherpendragon made warre on the duke of cornewayl and how by the moyane of Merlyn he laye by the duchesse & gate Arthur . . . . . Capitulo ii

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IT befel in the dayes of Uther pendragon when he was kynge of all Englond, and so regned that there was a myzty duke in Cornewaill that helde warre ageynst hym long tyme. And the duke was called the duke of Tyntagil, and so by meanes kynge Uther send for this duk, chargyng hym to brynge his wyf with hym, for she was called a fair lady, and a passynge wyse, and her name was called Igrayne.

So whan the duke and his wyf were comyn vnto the kynge by the meanes of grete lordes they were accorded bothe, the kynge lyked and loued this lady wel, and he made them grete chere oute of mesure, and desyred to haue lyen by her. But she was a passyng good woman, and wold not assente vnto the kynge. And thenne she told the duke her husband and said I suppose that we were sente for that I shold be dishonoured wherfor husband I counceille yow that we departe from hens sodenly that we maye ryde all nyghte vnto oure owne castell, and in lyke wyse as she saide so

they departed, that neyther the kynge nor none of his counceill were ware of their departyng. Also soone as kyng Uther knewe of theire departyng soo sodenly, he was wonderly wrothe. Thenne he called to hym his pryuy counceille, and told them of the sodeyne departyng of the duke and his wyf.

Thenne they auysed the kynge to send for the duke and his wyf by a grete charge. And yf he wille not come at your somōs, thenne may ye do your best, thenne haue ye cause to make myghty werre vpon hym. Soo that was done and the messagers hadde their ansuers. And that was thys shortly, that neyther he nor his wyf wold not come at hym.

Thenne was the kyng wonderly wroth. And thenne the kyng sente hym playne word ageyne, and badde hym be redy and stuffe hym and garnysshe hym, for within xl dayes he wold fetche hym oute of the byggest castell that he hath.

Whanne the duke hadde thys warnynge, anone he wente and furnysshed and garnysshed two stronge Castels of his of the whiche the one hyght Tyntagil, & the other castel hyzt Terrabyl. So his wyf Dame Igrayne he putte in the castell of Tyntagil. And hym self he putte in the castel of Terrabyl the whiche had many yssues and posternes oute. Thenne in all haste came Uther with a grete hoost, and leyd a syege aboute the castel of Terrabil. And ther he pyght many pauelyons, and there was grete warre made on bothe partyes, and moche peple slayne. Thenne for pure angre and for grete loue of fayr Igrayne the kyng Uther felle seke. So came to the kynge Uther Syre Ulfius a noble knyght, and asked the kynge why he was seke. I shall telle the said the kynge, I am seke for angre and for loue of fayre Igrayne that I may not be hool, wel my lord said Syre Ulfius, I shal seke Merlyn, and he shalle do yow remedy that youre herte shal be pleasyd. Sō ulfius departed, and by aduenture he mette Merlyn in a beggarȝ aray, and ther Merlyn asked Ulfius whome he soughte, and he said he had lytyl ado to telle hym. Well saide Merlyn, I knowe whome thou sekest, for thou sekest Merlyn, therfore seke no ferther, for I am he, and yf kynge Uther wille wel rewarde me, and be sworne vnto me to fulfille my desyre that shall be his honour & profite more thā myn for I shalle

cause hym to haue alle his desyre. Alle this wyll I vndertake said Ulfius that ther shalle be nothyng resonable, but thow shalt haue thy desyre, well said Merlyn, he shall haue his entente and desyre. And therfore saide Merlyn, ryde on your wey, for I wille not be long behynde.

Capitulum Secundum.

THENNE Ulfius was glad and rode on more than a paas tyll that he came to kynge Utherpendragon, and told hym he had met with Merlyn, where is he said the kyng sir said Ulfius he wille not dwelle long, ther with al Ulfius was ware where Merlyn stood at the porche of the pauelions dore. And thenne Merlyn was bounde to come to the kynge. Whan kyng Uther sawe him he said he was welcome, syr said Merlyn I knowe al your hert euery dele, so ye wil be sworn vnto me as ye be a true kynge enoynted to fulfille my desyre ye shal haue your desyre, thenne the kyng was sworne vpon the iiii. euuā-gelistes. Syre said Merlyn this is my desyre, the first nyzt y^{t} ye shal lye by Igrayne ye shal gete a child on her & whan that is borne that it shall be delyuerd to me for to nourisshe there as I wille haue it, for it shal be your worship, & the childis auaille as mykel as the child is worth. I wylle wel said the kynge as thow wilt haue it. Now make you redy said Merlyn this nyght ye shalle lye with Igrayne in the castel of Tyntigayll, & ye shalle be lyke the duke her husband Ulfyus shal be lyke Syre Brastias, a knyghte of the dukes, And I will be lyke a knyghte that hyghte Syr Jordanus a knyghte of the dukes. But wayte ye make not many questions with her nor her men, but saye ye are diseased and soo hye yow to bedde, and ryse not on the morne tyll I come to yow, for the castel of Tyntygaill is but x myle hens, soo this was done as they deuysed. But the duke of Tyntigail aspyed hou the kyng rode fro the syege of tarabil, & therfor that nyghte he yssued oute of the castel at a posterne for to haue distressid the kynges hooste. And so thorowe his owne yssue the duke hymself was slayne or euer the kynge cam at the castel of Tyntigail, so after the deth of the duke kyng Uther lay with Igrayne more than thre houres after

his deth, and begat on her that nygz arthur, & or day cam Merlyn cā to the kyng, & bad hym make hym redy, & so he kist the lady Igrayne and departed in all hast. But whan the lady herd telle of the duke her husbād and by all record he was dede or euer kynge Uther came to her thenne she merueilled who that myghte be that laye with her in lykenes of her lord, so she mourned pryuely and held hir pees. Thenne alle the barons by one assent prayd the Kynge of accord betwixe the lady Igrayne and hym, the kynge gaf hem leue, for fayne wold he haue ben accorded with her. Soo the kyng put alle the trust in Ulfyus to entrete bitwene them so by the entrete at the last the kyng & she met to gyder. Now wille we doo wel said Ulfyus, our kyng is a lusty knyghte and wyueles, & my lady Igrayne is a passynge fair lady, it were grete ioye vnto vs all and hit myghte please the kynge to make her his quene, vnto that they all well accorded and meued it to the kynge. And anone lyke a lusty knyghte, he assentid therto with good wille, and so in alle haste they were maryed in a mornynge with grete myrthe and Joye.

And Kynge Lott of Lowthean and of Orkenay thenne wedded Margawse that was Gaweyns moder. And kynge Nentres of the land of Garlot wedded Elayne. Al this was done at the request of kynge Uther. And the thyrd syster morgan le fey was put to scole in a nonnery. And ther she lerned so moche that she was a grete Clerke of Nygromancye. And after she was wedded to kynge Uryens of the lond of Gore that was Syre Ewayns le blaunche maynys fader.

Capitulum Tercium.

THĒNE quene Igrayne waxid dayly gretter & gretter, so it befel after within half a yere as kyng Uther lay by his quene he asked hir by the feith she ouzt to hym whos was the child within her body, thēne was she sore abasshed to yeue ansuer. Desmaye you not said the kyng but telle me the trouthe, and I shall loue you the better by the feythe of my body. Syre saide she I shalle telle you the trouthe, the same nyghte y^{t} my lord was dede the houre of his deth as

his knyztes record ther came in to my castel of Tyntigaill a man lyke my lord in speche and in countenaunce, and two knyghtes with hym in lykenes of his two knyghtes barcias and Jordans, & soo I went vnto bed with hym as I ouzt to do with my lord, & the same nyght as I shal ansuer vnto god this child was begoten vpon me, that is trouthe saide the kynge as ye say, for it was I my self that cam in the lykenesse, & therfor desmay you not for I am fader to the child, & ther he told her alle the cause, how it was by Merlyns counceil, thenne the quene made grete ioye whan she knewe who was the fader of her child. Sone come merlyn vnto the kyng, & sayd syr ye must puruey yow, for the nourisshyng of your child, as thou wolt said the kyng be it, wel said Merlyn I knowe a lord of yours in this land that is a passyng true man & a feithful, & he shal haue the nourysshyng of your child, & his name is sir Ector, & he is a lord of fair lyuelode in many partyes in Englond & Walys, & this lord sir ector lete hym be sent for, for to come & speke with you, & desyre hym your self as he loueth you that he will put his owne child to nourisshynge to another woman, and that his Wyf nourisshe yours. And whan the child is borne lete it be delyuerd to me at yōder pryuy posterne vncrystned. So like as Merlyn deuysed it was done. And whan syre Ector was come, he made fyaūce to the kyng for to nourisshe the child lyke as the Kynge desyred, and there the kyng graunted syr ector grete rewardys. Thenne when the lady was delyuerd the kynge commaunded ii knyghtes & ii ladyes to take the child bound in a cloth of gold, & that ye delyuer hym to what poure man ye mete at the posterne yate of the castel. So the child was delyuerd vnto Merlyn, and so he bare it forth vnto Syre Ector, and made an holy man to crysten hym, and named hym Arthur, and so sir Ectors wyf nourysshed hym with her owne pappe. Thenne within two yeres kyng Uther felle seke of a grete maladye. And in the meane whyle hys enemyes vsurpped vpon hym, and dyd a grete bataylle vpon his men, and slewe many of his peple. Sir said Merlyn ye may not lye so as ye doo, for ye must to the feld though ye ryde on an hors lyttar, for ye shall neuer haue the better of your enemyes, but yf your persone be there, and thenne shall ye haue the vyctory. So it was done as Merlyn had deuysed, and they caryed the kynge forth in an hors lyttar

with a grete hooste towarde his enemyes. And at saynt Albons ther mette with the kynge a grete hoost of the north. And that day Syre Ulfyus and sir Bracias dyd grete dedes of armes, and kyng Uthers men ouercome the northeryn bataylle and slewe many peple & putt the remenaunt to flight. And thenne the kyng retorned vnto london and made grete ioye of his vyctory. And thēne he fyll passynge sore seke, so that thre dayes & thre nyghtes he was specheles. Wherfore alle the barons made grete sorow and asked Merlyn what counceill were best. There nys none other remedye said Merlyn but god wil haue his wille. But loke ye al Barons be bifore kynge Uther to morne, and god and I shalle make hym to speke. So on the morne alle the Barons with merlyn came to fore the kyng, thēne Merlyn said aloud vnto kyng Uther, Syre shall your sone Arthur be kyng after your dayes of this realme with all the appertenaunce, thenne Utherpendragon torned hym and said in herynge of them alle I gyue hym gods blessyng & myne, & byd hym pray for my soule, & righteuously & worshipfully that he clayme y^e^ croune vpon forfeture of my blessyng, & therwith he yelde vp the ghost & thenne was he enterid as longed to a kyng. Wherfor the quene fayre Igrayne made grete sorowe and alle the Barons. Thenne stood the reame in grete ieopardy long whyle, for euery lord that was myghty of men maade hym stronge, and many wende to haue ben kyng. Thenne Merlyn wente to the archebisshop of Caunterbury, and counceilled hym for to sende for alle the lordes of the reame, and alle the gentilmen of armes that they shold to london come by Cristmas vpon payne of cursynge. And for this cause y^t^ Jhu that was borne on that nyghte that he wold of his grete mercy shewe some myracle, as he was come to be kynge of mankynde for to shewe somme myracle who shold be rightwys kynge of this reame. So the Archebisshop by the aduys of Merlyn send for alle the lordes and gentilmen of armes that they shold come by crystmasse euen vnto london. And many of hem made hem clene of her lyf that her prayer myghte be the more acceptable vnto god. Soo in the grettest chirch of london whether it were Powlis or not the Frensshe booke maketh no mencyon, alle the estates were longe or day in the chirche for to praye. And whan matyns & the first masse was done,

there was sene in the chircheyard ayēst the hyhe aulter a grete stone four square lyke vnto a marbel stone. And in myddes therof was lyke an Anuylde of stele a foot on hyghe, & theryn stack a fayre swerd naked by the poynt, and letters there were wryten in gold aboute the swerd that saiden thus, who so pulleth oute this swerd of this stone and anuyld, is rightwys kynge borne of all Englond. Thenne the peple merueilled & told it to the Archebisshop. I commande said tharchebisshop that ye kepe yow within your chirche, and pray vnto god still that no man touche the suerd tyll the hyhe masse be all done. So whan all masses were done all the lordes wente to beholde the stone and the swerd. And whan they sawe the scripture, som assayed suche as wold haue ben kyng. But none myght stere the swerd nor meue hit. He is not here said the Archebisshop that shall encheue the swerd but doubte not god will make hym knowen. But this is my counceill said the archebisshop, that we lete puruey x knyztes men of good fame, & they to kepe this swerd, so it was ordeyned, & thēne ther was made a crye, y^{t} euery mā shold assay y^{t} wold for to wynne the swerd. And vpon newe yeers day the barons lete maake a Justes and a tournement, that alle knyztes that wold Juste or tourneye, there myzt playe, & all this was ordeyned for to kepe the lordes to gyders & the comyns, for the Archebisshop trusted, that god wold make hym knowe that shold wynne the swerd. So vpon newe yeres day whan the seruyce was done, the barons rode vnto the feld, some to Juste, & som to torney, & so it happed that syre Ector that had grete lyuelode aboute london rode vnto the Justes, & with hym rode syr kaynus his sone & yong Arthur that was hys nourisshed broder, & syr kay was made knyzt at al halowmas afore. So as they rode to y^{e} Justes ward, sir kay had lost his suerd for he had lefte it at his faders lodgyng, & so he prayd yong Arthur for to ryde for his swerd. I wyll wel said Arthur, & rode fast after y^{e} swerd, & whan he cam home, the lady & al were out to see the Joustyng, thenne was Arthur wroth & saide to hym self, I will ryde to the chircheyard, & take the swerd with me that stycketh in the stone, for my broder sir kay shal not be without a swerd this day, so whan he cam to the chircheyard sir Arthur alizt & tayed his hors to the style, & so he wente

to the tent, & found no knyztes there, for they were atte Justyng & so he handled the swerd by the handels, and liztly & fiersly pulled it out of the stone, & took his hors & rode his way vntyll he came to his broder sir kay, & delyuerd hym the swerd, & as sone as sir kay saw the swerd he wist wel it was the swerd of the stone, & so he rode to his fader syr Ector, & said, sire, loo here is the swerd of the stone, wherfor I must be kyng of thys land. When syre Ector beheld the swerd, he retorned ageyne & cam to the chirche, & there they alizte al thre, & wente in to the chirche. And anon he made sir kay to swere vpon a book, how he came to that swerd. Syr said sir kay by my broder Arthur for he brought it to me, how gate ye this swerd said sir Ector to Arthur, sir I will telle you, when I cam home for my broders swerd, I fond no body at home to delyuer me his swerd. And so I thought my broder syr kay shold not be swerdles, & so I cam hyder egerly & pulled it out of the stone withoute ony payn, found ye ony knyztes about this swerd seid sir ector. Nay said Arthur. Now said sir Ector to Arthur I vnderstãde ye must be kynge of this land. Wherfore I, sayd Arthur and for what cause. Sire saide Ector, for god wille haue hit soo for ther shold neuer man haue drawen oute this swerde, but he that shal be rightwys kyng of this land. Now lete me see whether ye can putte the swerd ther as it was, and pulle hit oute ageyne, that is no maystry said Arthur, and soo he put it in the stone, therwith alle Sir Ector assayed to pulle oute the swerd and faylled.

Capitulum Sextum.

Now assay said Syre Ector vnto Syre kay. And anon he pulled at the swerd with alle his myghte, but it wold not be. Now shal ye assay said Syre Ector to Arthur I wyll wel said Arthur and pulled it out easily. And therwith alle Syre Ector knelyd doune to the erthe and Syre Kay. Allas said Arthur myne own dere fader and broder why knele ye to me. Nay nay my lord Arthur, it is not so I was neuer your fader nor of your blood, but I wote wel ye are of an hyher blood than I wende ye were. And

thenne Syre Ector told hym all how he was bitaken hym for to nourisshe hym And by whoos commandement, and by Merlyns delyueraūce.

Thenne Arthur made grete doole whan he vnderstood that Syre Ector was not his fader. Sir said Ector vnto Arthur woll ye be my good & gracious lord when ye are kyng, els were I to blame said arthur for ye are the man in the world that I am most be holdyng to, & my good lady & moder your wyf that as wel as her owne hath fostred me and kepte. And yf euer hit be goddes will that I be kynge as ye say, ye shall desyre of me what I may doo, and I shalle not faille yow, god forbede I shold faille yow. Sir said Sire Ector, I will aske no more of yow, but that ye wille make my sone your foster broder Syre Kay Senceall of alle your landes. That shalle be done said Arthur, and more by the feith of my body that neuer man shalle haue that office but he whyle he and I lyue. There with all they wente vnto the Archebisshop, and told hym how the swerd was encheued, and by whome, and on twelfth day alle the barons cam thyder, and to assay to take the swerd who that wold assay. But there afore hem alle ther myghte none take it out but Arthur, wherfor ther were many lordes wroth And saide it was grete shame vnto them all and the reame to be ouer gouernyd with a boye of no hyghe blood borne, and so they fell oute at that tyme that it was put of tyll Candelmas. And thenne alle the barons shold mete there ageyne, but alwey the x knyghtes were ordeyned to watche the swerd day & nyzt, & so they sette a pauelione ouer the stone & y^{e} swerd & fyue alwayes watched. Soo at Candalmasse many moo grete lordes came thyder for to haue wonne the swerde, but there myghte none preuaille. And right as Arthur dyd at Cristmasse, he dyd at Candelmasse and pulled oute the swerde easely wherof the Barons were sore agreued and put it of in delay till the hyghe feste of Eester. And as Arthur sped afore, so dyd he at Eester, yet there were some of the grete lordes had indignacion that Arthur shold be kynge, and put it of in a delay tyll the feest of Pentecoste. Thenne the Archebisshop of Caunterbury by Merlyns prouydence lete purueye thenne of the best knyghtes that they myghte gete. And suche knyghtes as Utherpendragon loued best and moost trusted in his dayes. And

suche knyghtes were put aboute Arthur as syr Bawdewyn of Bretayn, syre kaynes, syre Ulfyus, syre barcias. All these with many other were alweyes about Arthur day and nyghte till the feste of Pentecost.

Capitulum Septimum.

And at the feste of pentecost alle maner of men assayed to pulle at the swerde that wold assay, but none myghte preuaille but Arthur, and pulled it oute afore all the lordes and comyns that were there, wherfore alle the comyns cryed at ones we wille haue Arthur vnto our kyng we wille put hym no more in delay, for we alle see that it is goddes wille that he shalle be our kynge. And who that holdeth ageynst it we wille slee hym. And therwith all they knelyd at ones both ryche and poure, and cryed Arthur mercy by cause they had delayed hym so longe, and Arthur foryaf hem, and took the swerd bitwene both his handes, and offred it vpon the aulter where the Archebisshop was, and so was he made knyghte of the best man that was there. And so anon was the coronacyon made. And ther was he sworne vnto his lordes & the comyns for to be a true kyng to stand with true Justyce fro thens forth the dayes of this lyf. Also thēne he made alle lordes that helde of the croune to come in, and to do seruyce as they oughte to doo. And many complayntes were made vnto sir Arthur of grete wronges that were done syn the dethe of kyng Uther, of many londes that were bereued lordes, knyghtes, ladyes & gentilmen, wherfor kynge Arthur maade the londes to be yeuen ageyne vnto them that oughte hem.

Whanne this was done that the kyng had stablisshed alle the countreyes aboute london, thenne he lete make Syr kay sencial of Englond, and sir Baudewyn of Bretayne was made Constable, and sir Ulfyus was made chamberlayn. And sire Brastias was maade wardeyn to wayte vpon the northe fro Trent forwardes for it was y^{t} tyme y^{e} most party the kynges enemyes. But within fewe yeres after Arthur wan alle the north scotland, and alle that were vnder their obeissannce.

Also Walys a parte of it helde ayenst Arthur, but he ouercam hem al as he dyd the remenaunt thurgh the noble prowesse of hym self and his knyghtes of the round table.

Capitulum Octavum.

THENNE the kyng remeued in to Walys, and lete crye a grete feste that it shold be holdyn at Pentecost after the incoronacion of hym at the Cyte of Carlyon, vnto the fest come kyng Lott of Lowthean, and of Orkeney, with fyue C knyztes with hym. Also ther come to the feste kynge Uryens of gore with four C knyztes with hym. Also ther come to that feeste kyng Nayntres of garloth with seuen C knyghtes with hym. Also ther came to the feest the kynge of Scotland with sixe honderd knyghtes with hym, and he was but a yong man. Also ther came to the feste a kyng that was called the kyng with the honderd knyghtes, but he and his men were passyng wel bisene at al poyntes. Also ther cam the kyng of Cardos with fyue honderd knyghtes. And kyng Arthur was glad of their comynge, for he wende that al the kynges and knyghtes had come for grete loue, and to haue done hym worship at his feste, wherfor the kyng made grete ioye, and sente the kynges and knyghtes grete presentes. But the kynges wold none receyue, but rebuked the messagers shamefully, and said they had no ioye to receyue no yeftes of a berdles boye that was come of lowe blood, and sente hym word, they wold none of his yeftes. But that they were come to gyue hym yeftes with hard swerdys betwixt the neck and the sholders. And therfore they came thyder, so they told to the messagers playnly, for it was grete shame to all them to see suche a boye to haue a rule of soo noble a reaume as this land was. With this ansuer the messagers departed & told to kyng Arthur this ansuer. Wherfor by the aduys of his barons he took hym to a strong towre with .v. C good men with hym. And all the kynges afore said in a maner leyd a syege tofore hym, but kyng Arthur was well vytailled. And with in xv dayes ther came Merlyn amonge hem in to the Cyte of Carlyon, thenne all the kynges were passyng gladde of Merlyn, and asked

hym for what cause is that boye Arthur made your kynge. Syres said Merlyn, I shalle telle yow the cause for he is kynge Utherpendragons sone borne in wedlok goten on Igrayne the dukes wyf of Tyntigail, thenne is he a bastard they said al, nay said Merlyn. After the deth of the duke more than thre houres was Arthur begoten. And xiii dayes after kyng Uther wedded Igrayne. And therfor I preue hym he is no bastard. And who saith nay, he shal be kyng and ouercome alle his enemyes. And or he deye, he shalle be long kynge of all Englond, and haue vnder his obeyssaunce Walys, yrland and Scotland, and moo reames than I will now reherce. Some of the kynges had merueyl of Merlyns wordes and demed well that it shold be as he said. And som of hem lough hym to scorne, as kyng Lot, and mo other called hym a wytche. But thenne were they accorded with Merlyn that kynge Arthur shold come oute and speke with the kynges, and to come sauf and to goo sauf, suche suraunce ther was made. So Merlyn went vnto kynge Arthur, and told hym how he had done, and badde hym fere not but come oute boldly and speke with hem, and spare hem not, but ansuere them as their kynge and chyuetayn, for ye shal ouercome hem all whether they wille or nylle.

Capitulum ix.

Thenne kynge Arthur came oute of his tour, and had vnder his gowne a Jesseraunte of double maylle, and ther wente with hym the Archebisshop of Caunterbury, and syr Baudewyn of Bretayne and syr kay, and syre Brastias, these were the men of moost worship that were with hym. And whan they were mette, there was no mekenes but stoute wordes on bothe sydes, but alweyes kynge Arthur ansuerd them and said, he wold make them to bowe and he lyued wherfore they departed with wrath, and kynge Arthur badde kepe hem wel, and they bad the kynge kepe hym wel. Soo the kynge retornyd hym to the toure ageyne and armed hym and alle his knyztes, what will ye do said Merlyn to the kynges ye were better for to stynte, for ye shalle not here preuaille though ye were

x so many, be we wel auysed to be aferd of a dreme reder said kyng Lot, with that Merlyn vanysshed aweye, and came to kynge Arthur, and bad hym set on hem fiersly, & in the mene whyle there were thre honderd good men of the best that were with the kynges, that wente streyghte vnto kynge Arthur, and that comforted hym gretely. Syr said Merlyn to Arthur, fyghte not with the swerde that ye had by myracle, til that ye see ye go vnto the wers, thenne drawe it out and do your best. So forth with alle kynge Arthur sette vpon hem in their lodgyng. And syre Bawdewyn syre Kay and syr Brastias slewe on the right hand & on the lyfte hand that it was merueylle, and alweyes Kynge Arthur on horsback leyd on with a swerd and dyd merueillous dedes of armes that many of the kynges had grete ioye of his dedes and hardynesse. Thenne Kynge Lot brake out on the bak syde, and the kyng with the honderd knyghtes and kyng Carados, and sette on Arthur fiersly behynde hym, with that Syre Arthur torned with his knyghtes, and smote behynd and before, and ever sir Arthur was in the formest prees tyl his hors was slayne vndernethe hym. And therwith kynge lot smote doune kyng Arthur. With that his four knyghtes receyued hym and set hym on horsback, thēne. he drewe his swerd Excalibur, but it was so bryght in his enemyes eyen, that it gaf light lyke xxx torchys. And therwith he put hem on bak, and slewe moche peple. And thenne the comyns of Carlyon aroos with clubbis and stauys and slewe many knyghtes, but alle the kynges helde them to gyders with her knyghtes that were lefte on lyue, and so fled and departed. And Merlyn come vnto Arthur, and counceilled hym to folowe hem no further.

Capitulum x.

So after the feste and iourneye kynge Arthur drewe hym vnto london, and soo by the counceil of Merlyn the kyng lete calle his barons to coūceil, for Merlyn had told the kynge that the sixe kynges that made warre vpon hym wold in al haste be awroke on hym & on his landys, wherfor the kyng asked counceil at hem al, they coude no counceil gyue but said they were bygge ynough, ye saye

wel said Arthur. I thanke you for your good courage, but wil ye al that loueth me speke with Merlyn ye knowe wel that he hath done moche for me, and he knoweth many thynges, & whan he is afore you, I wold that ye prayd hym hertely of his best auyse. Alle the barons sayd they wold pray hym and desyre hym. Soo Merlyn was sente for & fair desyred of al the barons to gyue them best counceil. I shall say you said Merlyn I warne yow al, your enemyes are passyng strong for yow, and they are good men of armes as ben on lyue, & by thys tyme they haue goten to them four kynges mo, and a myghty duke, and onlesse that our kyng haue more chyualry with hym than he may make within y^e^ boundys of his own reame and he fyghte with hem in batail, he shal be ouercome & slayn, what were best to doo in this cause said al the barons. I shal telle you said Merlyn myne aduys, there ar two bretheren beyond the see, & they be kynges bothe and merueillous good men of her handes. And that one hyghte Kynge Ban of Benwic And that other hyght Kyng Bors of gaule that is Fraunce. And on these two Kynges warrith a myghty man of men the Kynge Claudas, and stryueth with hem for a castel, and grete werre is betwixt them. But this Claudas is so myghty of goodes wherof he geteth good Knyztes that he putteth these two kynges moost parte do the werse, wherfor this is my counceil that our kyng and souerayne lord sende vnto the kynges Ban and Bors by two trusty knyghtes with letters wel deuysed, that and they wil come and see kynge Arthur and his courte, & so helpe hym in his warrys that he wil be sworne vnto them to helpe them in their warrys ageynst kynge Claudas. Now what saye ye vnto this counceill said Merlyn, thys is wel counceilled said the kynge & alle the Barons, right so in alle haste ther were ordeyned to goo two knyghtes on the message vnto the two kynges. Soo were there made letters in the plesaunt wyse accordyng vnto kyng Arthurs desyre, Ulfyus and Brastias were made the messagers, & so rode forth wel horsed and wel armed, and as the gyse was that tyme & so passed the see & rode toward the cyte of Benwyck, and there besydes were viii knyghtes that aspyed them. And at a strayt passage they mette with Ulfyus & Brastias, & wold haue taken hem prysoners, so they prayd hem that they myght passe, for

they were messagers vnto kyng Ban & Bors sent from kynge Arthur, therfor said the viii knyghtes ye shalle dye or be prysoners, for we ben knyghtes of kyng Claudas. And therwith two of them dressid their sperys, and Ulfyus and Brastias dressid theire speres, and ranne to gyder with grete raundon. And Claudas knyghtes brack their speres, and ther to hylde and bare the two knyghtes out of her sadels to the erthe, and so lefte hem lyeng and rode her wayes. And the other sixe knyghtes rode afore to a passage to mete wyth hem ageyne, and so Ulfyus & Brastias smote other two doun And so past on her wayes. And at the fourth passage there mette two for two, and bothe were leid vnto the erthe, so ther was none of the viii knyghtes but he was sore hurte or brysed. And whan they come to Benwick it fortuned ther were both kynges Ban and Bors. And whan it was told the kynges that there were come messagers, there were sente vnto them ii knyghtes of worship, the one hyghte Lyonses lord of the countrey of payarne and Sir phariaunce a worshipful knyght. Anone they asked from whens they came, and they said from kynge Arthur kyng of Englond, so they took them in theyre armes and made grete ioye eche of other. But anon as the ii kynges wist they were messagers of Arthurs, ther was made no taryenge, but forthwith they spak with the knyghtes, & welcomed hem in the feythfullest wyse, & said, they were most welcome vnto them before alle the kynges lyuynge, and ther with they kyst the letters & delyuerd hem. And whan Ban and Bors vnderstood the letters, thenne were they more welcome than they were before. And after the hast of the letters, they gaf hem this ansuer that they wold fulfille the desyre of kynge Arthurs wrytyng & Ulfyus & Brastias tary there as longe as they wold, they shold haue suche chere as myghte be made them in tho marchys. Thenne Ulfyus & Brastias told the kyng of the aduēture at their passages of the eyghte knyztes. Ha A said Ban and Bors they were my good frendes. I wold I had wyst of hem they shold not haue escaped so. So Ulfius & Brastias had good chere and grete yeftes as moche as they myghte bere awey, and hadde their ansuere by mouthe and by wrytynge that tho two Kynges wold come vnto Arthur in all the hast that they myzte. So the two Knyghtes rode on a fore, and passed the see, and come

to their lord and told hym how they had spedde, wherof Kynge Arthur was passyng gladde. At what tyme suppose ye, the ii Kynges wol be here. Syr said they afore all halowmasse. Thenne the kynge lete puruey for a grete feeste, and lete crye a grete Justes. And by all halowmasse the two kynges were come ouer the see with thre honderd knyztes wel arayed both for the pees and for the werre. And kyng Arthur mette with hem x myle oute of london, and ther was grete ioye as coude be thouzt or made. And on al halowmasse at the grete feeste sate in the halle the thre kynges, and syre kay sencial serued in the halle. And Syr lucas the bottelere that was duke Corneus sone, & sir gryflet that was the sone of Cardol, these iii knyztes had the rule of alle the seruyse that serued the kynges. And anon as they had wasshen & rysen, al knyztes that wold juste made hem redy, by than they were redy on horsbak there were vii C knyghtes. And Arthur Ban & Bors with the Archebisshop of Caunterbury, and syre Ector kays fader they were in a place couerd with clothe of gold lyke an halle with ladyes and gentil-wymmen for to behold who dyd best and thereon to gyue jugement.

Capitulum xi.

And kynge Arthur and the two Kynges lete departe the vii C knyghtes in two partyes. And there were iii C knyghtes of the reame of Benwick and of gaule torned on the other syde than they dressid her sheldes, and beganne to couche her speres many good knyghtes. So Gryflet was the first that mette with a knyghte one ladynas and they mett so egerly that al men hadde wonder. And they soo faughte that her sheldes felle to pyeces, and hors and man felle to the erthe. And bothe the frensshe knyghte and the Englysshe knyghte lay so longe that alle men wend they had ben dede. Whan lucas the botteler sawe Gryflet soo lye, he horsed hym ageyne anon, and they two dyd merueillous dedes of armes with many bachelers. Also syre kay came oute of an enbusshement with fyue knyghtes with hym, and they sixe smote other sixe doune. But syr kay dyd that day merueillous dedes of armes, that ther was

none dyd so wel as he that day. Thenne ther come ladynas & Grastian two knyghtes of fraunce, and dyd passynge wel that all men preysed them.

Thenne come there Syre placidas a good knyghte and mette with syr kay and smote hym doune hors and man, wherfore Syre gryflet was wrothe and mette with Syre placidas soo harde that hors and man felle to the erthe. But whan the .v. knyghtes wyst that syr kay had a falle they were wrothe out of wyt. And therwith eche of them .v. bare doune a knyghte. Whanne kyng Arthur and the two kynges sawe hem begyn waxe wrothe on bothe partyes, they lepte on smale hakeneis, and lete crye that all men shold departe vnto their lodgynge. And so they wente home and vnarmed them and so to euen songe and souper. And after the thre kynges wente in to a gardyn, and gaf the pryce vnto syre kay and to lucas the bottelere, and vnto Syre Gryflet. And thenne they wente vnto conn-ceil, and with hem gwenbaus the brother vnto syr Ban & Bors a wyse Clerk, and thyder wente Ulfyus and Brastias and Merlyn. And after they had ben in counceill, they wente vn to bedde. And on the morne they herde masse and to dyner, and so to their coun-ceille and made many argumentis what were best to doo. At the last they were concluded, that Merlyn shold goo with a token of kyng Ban and that was a rynge vnto his men and kynge Bors and Gracian & placidas sholde goo ageyne and kepe theire castels and her coun-treyes, as for kynge Ban of Benwick and kynge Bors of Gaules had ordeyned hem, and so passed the see and came to Benwyck. And whan the peple sawe kyng Bans rynge & gracian and placidas they were glad, and asked how the kynges ferd, and made grete ioye of their welfare and cordyng, and accordynge vnto the souerayne lordes desyre, the men of warre made hem redy in al hast possyble, soo that they were xv M on hors and foot, and they had grete plente of vytaylle with hem by Merlyns prouysyon. But gracian and placidas were lefte to furnysshe and garnysshe the castels for drede of kynge Claudas. ryght so Merlyn passed the see wel vytailled bothe by water and by land. And whan he came to the see, he sente home the foote men ageyne and took no mo with hym, but x M men on horsbak the moost parte men of armes and so shypped and passed

the see in to Englond, and londed at Douer, and thorow the wytte of Merlyn he lad the hoost Northward the pryuyest wey that coude be thoughte vnto the foreist of Bedegrayne, and there in a valey he lodged hem secretely.

Thenne rode Merlyn vnto Arthur and the two kynges & told hem how he had sped, wherof they had grete merueylle, that man on erthe myghte spede so soone, and goo and come. So Merlyn told them x M were in the forest of Bedegrayne wel armed at al poyntes, thenne was there no more to saye, but to horsbak wente all the hoost as Arthur had afore purueyed. So with xx M he passed by nyghte and day, but ther was made suche an ordenaũce afore by Merlyn that ther shold no man of werre ryde nor go in no countrey on this syde trent water, but yf he had a token from kynge Arthur, where thorow the kynges enemyes durste not ryde as they dyd to fore to aspye.

Capitulum xii.

And soo within a lytel space the thre kynges came unto the Castel of Bedegrayne, and fond there a passynge fayr felauship and wel be sene, wherof they had grete ioye, and vytaille they wanted none. This was the cause of the northeren hoost that they were rered for the despyte and rebuke the syx kynges had at Carlyon. And tho vi kynges by her meanes gate vnto hem fyue other kynges. And thus they beganne to gadre theyr peple.

And how they sware that for wele nor woo they shold not leue other, tyl they had destroyed Arthur, and thenne they made an oth. The fyrst that beganne the othe was the duke of Candebenet, that he wold brynge with hym v M men of armes the which were redy on horsbak. Thenne sware kynge Brandegoris of stranggore that he wold brynge v M men of armes on horsbak. Thenne sware kynge Claryuaus of Northumberland he wold brynge thre thousand men of armes, thenne sware the kyng of the C knyghtes that was a passynge good man and a yonge that he wold brynge four thousand men of armes on horsbak, thenne ther swore kynge Lott a passyng

good knyzt and syre Gawayns fader that he wold brynge v M men of armes on horsbak. Also ther swore kynge Uryence that was syr Uwayns fader of the lond of gore and he wold brynge vi M men of armes on horsbak. Also ther swore kyng Idres of Cornewaille that he wold brynge v M men of armes on horsbak. Also ther swore kyng cardelmans to brynge v M mē on horsbak. Also ther swore kyng Agwysaunce of Irelond to brynge v M of armes on horsbak. Also ther swore kyng Nentres to brynge v M men of armes on horsbak. Also there swore kynge Carados to brynge v M men of armes on horsbak. Soo her hool hoost was of clene men of armes on horsbak fyfty thousand and a foot x thousand of good mennes bodyes, thenne were they soone redy and mounted vpon hors and sente forth their fore rydars, for these xi kynges in her wayes leyd a syege vnto the castel of Bedegrayne, and so they departed and drewe toward Arthur and lefte fewe to abyde at the syege for the castel of Bedegrayne was holden of kynge Arthur, and the men that were theryn were Arthurs.

Capitulum xiii.

Soo by Merlyns aduys ther were sente fore rydars to skumme the Countreye, & they mette with the fore rydars of the north, and made hem to telle whiche wey the hooste cam, and thenne they told it to Arthur, and by kyng Ban and Bors counceill they lete brenne and destroye alle the contrey afore them there they shold ryde.

The kynge with the honderd knyghtes mette a wonder dreme two nyghtes a fore the bataille, that ther blewe a grete wynde & blewe doun her castels and her townes, and after that cam a water and bare hit all awey. Alle that herd of the sweuen said, it was a token of grete batayll. Thenne by counceill of Merlyn whan they wist whiche wey the xi kynges wold ryde and lodge that nyghte. At mydnyght they sette vpon them as they were in theyr pauelyons. But the scoute watche by her hoost cryed lordes att armes for here be your enemyes at your hand.

Capitulum xiiii.

THENNE kynge Arthur and kynge Ban and Kynge Bors with her good and trusty knyghtes set on hem so fyersly that he made them ouer throwe her pauelions on her hedys, but the xi kynges by manly prowesse of armes tooke a fayre champayne, but there was slayne that morowe tyde x M good mennys bodyes. And so they had afore hem a strong passage yet were they fyfty M of hardy men. Thenne it drewe toward day, now shalle ye doo by myne aduys said Merlyn vnto the thre kynges I wold that kynge Ban and kynge Bors with her felauship of x M men were put in a wood here besyde in an enbusshement and kepe them preuy, and that they be leid or the lyght of the daye come, and that they stere not tyll ye and your knyghtes haue foughte with hem longe. And whanne hit is daye lyght dresse your bataille euen afore them and the passage that they maye see alle your hooste. For thenne wyl they be the more hardy when they see yow but aboute xx M, and cause hem to be the gladder to suffre yow and youre hoost to come ouer the passage. All the thre kynges and the hoole barons sayde that Merlyn said passyngly wel, and it was done anone as Merlyn had deuysed. Soo on the morn whan eyther hoost sawe other, the hoost of the north was well comforted. Thenne to Ulfyus and Brastias were delyuerd thre thowsand men of armes, and they sette on them fyersly in the passage, and slewe on the ryght hand and on the lyft hand that it was wonder to telle.

Whanne that the enleuen kynges sawe that there was so fewe a felauship dyd suche dedes of armes they were ashamed and sette on hem agayne fyersly, and ther was syr Ulfyus hors slayne under hym, but he dyd merueyllously well on foote. But the Duke Eustace of Cambenet and Kynge Claryaunce of Northumberland, were alweye greuous on Ulfyus, thenne Brastias sawe his felawe ferd so with al, he smote the duke with a spere that hors & man fell doune, that sawe kyng Claryaunce and retorned vnto Brastias, and eyther smote other soo that hors & man wente to the erthe, and so they lay long astonyed, & their hors knees brast to the hard bone. Thenne cam Syr

kay the sencyal with syxe felawes with hym, and dyd passyng wel, with that cam the xi kynges, and ther was Gryflet put to the erthe hors & man and lucas the bottelere hors and man by kynge Brandegorys and kyng Idres & kyng Agwysaunce, thēne waxed the medle passynge hard on bothe partyes, whan syre kay sawe Gryflet on foote, he rode on kyng Nentres & smote hym doun and lad his hors vnto syr gryflet & horsed hym ageyne. Also syr Kay with the same spere smote doun kyng Lott, & hurt hym passyng sore, that sawe the kyng with the C knyztes and ran vnto syr kay and smote hym doune and toke his hors, & gaf hym kyng Lott wherof he said gramercy. whan syr Gryflet sawe syr kay & lucas the bottelere on foote, he took a sharp spere grete and square, and rode to pynel a good man of armes, and smote hors and man doune. And thenne he tooke his hors, and gaf hym vnto syr kay. Thenne kynge Lot saw kyng Nentres on foote, he ranne vnto Melot de la roche, & smote hym doune hors and man & gaf kyng Nentres the hors & horsed hym ageyne. Also the kyng of the C knyztes sawe kynge Idres on foot thenne he ran vnto Gwymyart de bloy and smote hym doune hors and man & gaf kynge Idres the hors & horsed hym ageyne, & kyng Lot smote doun Claryaunce de la foreist saueage & gaf the hors vnto duke Eustace. And so whanne they had horsed the kynges ageyne they drewe hem al xi kynges to gyder and said they wold be reuenged of the dommage that they had taken that day. The meane whyle cam in syr Ector with an egyr countenaunce, and found Ulfyus and Brastias on foote in grete perylle of deth that were fowle defoyled vnder hors feet. Thenne Arthur as a lyon ranne vnto kynge Cradelment of North Walys, and smote hym thorowe the lyfte syde that the hors and the kynge fylle doune. And thenne he tooke the hors by the rayne, and ladde hym vnto Ulfyus & said haue this hors myn old frend, for grete nede hast thow of hors. gramercy said Ulfyus. thenne syre Arthur dyd so merueillously in armes that all men had wondyr. Whan the kynge with the C knyghtes sawe kyng Cradelment on foote, he ranne vnto syre Ector that was wel horsed, syr kayes fader, and smote hors and man doune, and gaf the hors vnto the kynge, and horsed hym ageyne, and when kyng Arthur sawe the kyng ryde on syr Ectors hors he was wroth

and with his swerd he smote the kynge on the helme, that a quarter of the helme and shelde fyll doune, and so the swerd carf doune vnto the hors neck, and so the kyng & the hors fyll doune to the ground. Thenne syr kay cam vnto syr Morganore sencial with the kyng of the C knyghtes & smote hym doun hors and man, and lad the hors vnto his fader syre Ector, thenne syr Ector ranne vnto a knyght hyghte lardans, & smote hors & man doune, & lad the hors vnto syr Brastias that grete nede had of an hors and was gretely defoyled. Whan Brastias beheld lucas the botteler that lay lyke a dede man vnder the horse feet, and euer syr Gryflet dyd merueillously for to rescowe hym, and there were alweyes xiiii knyghtes on syr lucas, & thenne Brastias smote one of hem on the helme, that it wente to the teeth, & he rode to another and smote hym that the arme flewe in to the feld. Thēne he wente to the third and smote hym on the sholder that sholder and arme flewe in the feld. And whan Gryflet sawe rescowes, he smote a knyght on the tempils that hede & helme wente to the erthe, and gryflet took the hors of that knyght & lad hym vnto syr lucas, & bad hym mounte vpon the hors & reuenge his hurtes. For Brastias had slayne a knyghte to fore & horsed gryflet.

Capitulum xb.

Thenne lucas sawe kyng Agwysaunce that late hadde slayne Morys de la roche, and lucas ran to hym with a short spere that was grete, that he gaf hym suche a falle that the hors felle doun to the erthe. Also lucas found there on fote bloyas de la flaundres and syr Gwynas ii hardy knyztes & in that woodenes that lucas was in, he slewe ii bachelers & horsed hem ageyn, thēne waxid the batail passyng hard on both partyes, but arthur was glad y^{t} his knyztes were horsed ayene & thēne they foughte to gyders that the noyse and sowne rang by the water & the wood. Wherfor kyng Ban and kyng bors made them redy and dressyd theyr sheldes and harneys, and they were so couragyous that many Knyghtes shoke & beuerd for egrenes. All this whyle lucas and Gwynas & bryaunte & Bellyas of Flaundrys helde strong medle ayenst vi kynges, that was kynge

Lott, kynge Nentres, kyng Brandegorys, Kyng Idres, kyng Uryens & kyng Agwysaunce. Soo with the helpe of syre kay & of syr gryflet, they helde these vi kynges hard that vnnethe they had ony power to defend them. But whan syr Arthur sawe the batail wold not be endyd by no maner, he ferd wood as a lyon, & stered his hors here & there on the right hand & on the lyft hand that he stynte not tyl he had slayne xx knyztes. Also he wounded kyng Lot sore on the sholder and made hym to leue that ground, for syre kay & gryflet dyd with kyng Arthur there grete dedes of armes. Thenne Ulfyus and Brastias, & sir Ector encountred ageynst the duke Eustace & kyng Cradelment & kyng Cradelmāt & kynge Claryaunce of Northumberland & kyng Carados & ageynst the kyng with the C knyztes. So these knyztes encountred with these kynges that they made them to auoyde the grounde. thēne Kyng Lott made grete dool for his dommagis & his felawes, & said vnto the x kynges but yf ye wil do as I deuyse we shalle be slayn & destroyed, lete me haue the kynge with the C Knyztes & kyng Agwysaunce & kyng Idres and the duke of Canbenec, & we v Kynges wol haue xv M men of armes with vs & we wille go on parte, wyle ye vi Kynges holde the medle with xii M. and we see that ye haue fouzten with hem long thēne will we come on fyersly, & ellys shall we neuer matche hem said kynge Lot but by this meane. So they departed as they here deuysed, & vi kynges made her party strong ageynst Arthur and made grete warre longe. In the meane whyle brake the enbusshement of Kynge Ban and kynge bors, and Lyonses and Pharyaunce had the aduant garde, and they two knyghtes mette with kyng Idres and his felaushiip, and there began a grete medele of brekyng of speres and smytynge of swerdys with sleynge of men and horses. And kyng Idres was nere at discomforture.

That sawe Agwysaunce the kynge and put lyonses and pharyaunce in poynte of dethe, for the duke of Canbenek came on with all with a grete felaushiip, soo these two knyghtes were in grete daunger of their lyues that they were fayn to retorne but alweyes they rescowed hem self and their felaushiip merueillously. Whan kynge Bors sawe tho knyghtes put on bak it greued hym sore, thēne he cam on so fast that his felaushiip semed as blak as Inde. Whan

kyng Lot had aspyed kynge bors, he knewe hym wel, thenne he said O Jhesu defende vs frō deth & horryble maymes, for I see wel we ben in grete perylle of dethe, for I see yonder a kynge one of the most worshipfullest men & one of the best knyztes of the world ben enclyned vnto his felauship, what is he said the kynge with the C knyztes, it is said kyng Lot kyng bors of gaule. I merueile how they come in to this countreye without wetynge of vs all. It was by Merlyns auyse said the knyghte. As for hym sayd kynge Carados, I wylle encountre with kynge bors, and ye wil rescowe me whan myster is, go on said they al, we wil do all that we may, thenne kyng Carados & his hoost rode on a softe pace tyl that they come as nyghe kynge Bors as a bowe draughte, thenne eyther bataill lete their hors renne as fast as they myghte. And Bleoberys that was godson vnto kynge Bors he bare his chyef standard, that was a passynge good knyghte. Now shall we see said kyng Bors hou these northeren bretons can bere the armes, & kyng bors encountred with a knyght, and smote hym thorow out with a spere that he fel dede vnto the erthe, and after drewe his swerd & dyd merueillous dedes of armes that all partyes had grete wōder therof, & his knyztes failled not but dyd their part, & kyng Carados was smyten to the erthe. With that came the kyng with the C knyztes & rescued kyng Carados myztely by force of armes, for he was a passyng good knyght of a kynge, & but a yong man.

Capitulum xvi.

By than come in to the feld kynge Ban as fyers as a lyon with bandys of grene, & therupon gold. Ha a said kyng Lot we must be discomfyte, for yonder I see the moste valyaunt knyght of the world, and the man of the most renoume, for suche ii bretheren as is kyng Ban & kyng bors ar not lyuynge, wherfore we must nedes voyde or deye. And but yf we auoyde manly and wysely, ther is but dethe. whanne kynge Ban came in to the bataill, he cam in so fiersly, that the strokes redounded ageyne fro the woode and the water, wherfor kynge Lott wepte for pyte and doole that he sawe so many

good knyztes take theyr ende. But thorowe the grete force of kyng Ban they made both the Northeren bataylles that were departed, hurtled to gyders for grete drede, and the thre kynges & their knyghtes slewe on euer that it was pyte on to behold that multitude of the people that fledde. But kynge Lott and Kynge of the honderd knyztes & kynge Morganore gadred the peple to gyders passyng knyghtly, and dyd grete prowesse of armes, and helde the bataill all that daye lyke hard. Whanne the kynge of the honderd knyghtes beheld the grete damage that kynge Ban dyd, he threst vnto hym wyth his hors and smote hym on hyhe vpon the helme a grete stroke and stonyed hym sore. Thenne kynge Ban was wroth with hym, and folowed on hym fyersly, the other sawe that, and cast vp his sheld & spored his hors forward. But the stroke of kynge Ban felle doune and carfe a cantel of the sheld, and the swerd slode doune by the hauberk behynde his back, & cut thorow the trappere of stele, and the hors euen in two pyeces that the swerd felte the erthe. Thenne the kynge of the C knyghtes voyded the hors lyghtly and with his swerd he broched the hors of kyng Ban thorow and thorow, with that kynge Ban voyded lyghtly from the deede hors, and thenne kynge Ban smote at the other so egrely, and smote hym on the helme that he felle to the erth. Also in that yre he feld kyng Morganore and there was grete slaughter of good knyghtes and moche peple, by than come in to the prees kynge Arthur, and fond Kynge Ban stondynge among dede men and dede hors fyghtynge on foote as a wood lyon, that ther came none nyghe hym as fer as he myght reche with his swerd, but he caughte a greuous buffet wherof Kynge Arthur had grete pyte. And Arthur was so blody that by his shelde ther myght no man knowe hym, for all was blood and braynes on his swerd. And as Arthur loked by hym he sawe a knyght that was passyngly wel horsed, and therwith syre Arthur ranne to hym, and smote hym on the helme that his swerd wente vnto his teeth, and the knyght sanke doune to the erthe dede, & anon Arthur tooke the hors by the rayne and ladde hym vnto kynge Ban & said fair broder, haue this hors, for ye haue grete myster therof & me repenteth sore of your grete dammage. Hit shall be soone reuengid said Kynge Ban, for I truste in god myn eure is not suche

but some of them may sore repente thys. I wol wel said Arthur, for I see your dedes full actual. Neuertheles I myghte not come at yow at that tyme. But whanne Kynge Ban was mounted on horsbak, thenne there beganne newe bataill the whyche was sore and hard, and passyng grete slaughter. And so thurgh grete force Kynge Arthur, Kynge Ban and Kynge Bors made her knyghtes a litel to withdrawe them. But alwey the xi Kynges with her chyualrye neuer torned bak, and so withdrewe hem to a lytil woode, and so ouer a lytyl ryuer, & there they rested hem, for on the nyghte they myghte haue no rest on the feld. And thene the xi kynges and knyghtes put hem on a hepe all to gyders as men adrad and out of all comforte, but ther was no man myghte passe them, they helde hem so hard to gyders bothe behynde and before that kynge Arthur had merueille of their dedes of armes and was passynge wrothe. A syr Arthur said kynge Ban and kynge Bors blame hem noughte, For they doo as good men ouzt to doo. For by my feith said kyng Ban, they are the best fyghtyng men and knyghtes of moost prowesse that euer I sawe or herd speke of. And tho xi kynges are men of grete worship. And yf they were longyng vnto yow, there were no kynge vnder the heuen hadde suche xi knyghtes and of suche worship. I may not loue hem said Arthur, they wold destroye me, that wote we wel said kynge Ban and Kynge Bors, for they are your mortal enemyes, and that hath ben preued afore hand. And this day they haue done theire parte, and that is grete pyte of theire wilfulnes. Thenne alle the xi kynges drewe hem to gyder. And thenne said kynge Lott, lordes ye must other wayes than ye do, or els the grete losse is behynde, ye may see what peple we haue lost, and what good men we lese, by cause we waytte alweyes on these foote men, and euer in sauynge of one of the foote men we lese x horsmen for hym, therfore this is myne aduys, lete vs put our foote men from vs, for it is nere nyghte. For the noble Arthur wille not tary on the foote men, for they maye saue hem self, the woode is nere hand. And whan we horsmen be to gyders, loke euerych of yow kynges lete make suche ordinaunce that none breke vpon payne of dethe. And who that seeth ony man dresse hym to flee, lightly that he be slayne, for it is better that we slee a coward than

thorow a coward alle we to be slayne. How saye ye said kynge Lott, ansuere me all ye kynges, it is wel said quod kynge Nentres, so said the kynge of the honderd knyghtes, the same saide the kynge Carados and kyng Uryence, so dyd kynge Idres and kyng brandegorys, and so dyd kyng Cradulmas and the duke of Cādebenet, the same said kyng Claryaunce & kyng Agwysaunce and sware they wold neuer faille other neyther for lyf nor for dethe. And who so that fledde but did as they dyd shold be slayne. Thenne they amended their harneys and ryghted theire sheldes and tooke newe sperys and sette hem on theire thyes and stode stille as hit had ben a plompe of wood.

Capitulum xvii.

Whanne Syre Arthur and kynge ban and bors byhelde them and all her knyghtes they preysed hem moche for their noble chere of chyualrye for the hardyest fyghters that euer they herd or sawe. With that there dressyd hem a xl noble knyghtes and saide vnto the thre kynges, they wold breke their bataille, these were her names. Lyonses, pharyaunce, Ulfyus, brastias, Ector, kaynes, lucas the bottelere, Gryflett la fyse de dieu, mariet de la roche, Gwynas de bloy, briāt de la foreyst saueage, bellaus, Moryans of the castel maydyns, flānedreus of the castel of ladyes, Annecians that was kynge bors godsone a noble knyght, ladynas de la rouse, Emerause, Caulas, Gracyens le casteleyn, one bloyse de la caase, and syre Colgreueaunce de gorre, all these knyztes rode on a fore with sperys on their thyes, and spored their horses myghtely as the horses myzte renne. And the xi kynges with parte of her knyztes russched with their horses as fast as they myzte with their speres, & ther they dyd on both partyes merueillous dedes of armes, soo came in to the thycke of the prees Arthur ban & bors & slewe doune right on both handes that her horses went in blood vp to the fytlokys. But euer the xi Kynges and their hooste was euer in the vysage of Arthur, wherfore Ban and Bors had grete merueille consyderyng the grete slauzter that there was, but at the last they were dryuen abak ouer

a lytil ryuer, with that came Merlyn on a grete black hors, and said vnto arthur thow hast neuer done, hast thou not done ynough, of thre score thousand this day hast thow lefte on lyue but xv M, and it is tyme to saye ho for god is wrothe with the that thow wolt neuer haue done, for yonder xi kynges at this tyme wyll not be ouerthrowen, but and thow tary on them ony lenger, thy fortune wille torne and they shall encreace. And therfor withdrawe yow vnto your lodgyng and reste you as soone as ye may and rewarde your good knyztes with gold and with syluer, for they haue wel deserued hit, there may no rychesse be to dere for them, for of so fewe men as ye haue ther were neuer men dyd more of prowesse than they haue done to day, for ye haue matched this day with the beste fyghters of the world, that is trouthe said kyng Ban and bors. Also said Merlyn, withdrawe yow where ye lyst, for this thre yere I dar vndertake they shalle not dere yow. And by than ye shalle here newe tydynges. And thenne Merlyn said vnto arthur, these xi kynges haue more on hand than they are ware of, for the Sarasyns ar londed in their countreyes mo than xl M that brenne and slee, and haue leid syege att the castel Wandesborow and make grete destruction, therfore drede yow not this thre yere.

Also syre al the goodes that ben goten at this bataill lete it be serched. And whanne ye haue it in your handys lete it be gyuen frely vnto these two kynges Ban and Bors that they may rewarde theyr knyghtes with all. And that shalle cause straungers to be of better wyll to do yow seruyse at nede. Also ye be able to reward youre owne knyghtes of your owne goodes whan someuer it lyketh you. It is wel said qd Arthur, and as thow hast deuysed so shal it be done. Whanne it was delyuerd to Ban & Bors they gaf the goodes as frely to their knyztes as frely as it was yeuen to them. Thenne Merlyn took his leue of Arthur and of the ii kynges for to go and see his mayster Bleyse that dwelde in Northumberland, and so he departed and cam to his maister that was passyng glad of his comynge, & there he tolde, how Arthur and the two kynges had sped at the grete batayll, and how it was ended, and told the names of euery kyng and knyght of worship that was there. And soo Bleyse wrote the bataill word by word as Merlyn told hym how it

began, & by whome, & in lyke wyse how it was endyd, and who had the werre. All the batails that were done in arthurs dayes, merlyn dyd his maister Bleyse do wryte. Also he did do wryte all the batails that euery worthy knyght dyd of arthurs Courte. After this Merlyn departed from his mayster and came to kynge Arthur that was in the castel of Bedegrayne, that was one of the castels that stondyn in the forest of Sherewood. And Merlyn was so disguysed that kynge Arthur knewe hym not, for he was all be furred in black shepe skynnes and a grete payre of bootes, and a bowe and arowes in a russet gowne, and broughte wild gyse in his hād, and it was on the morne after candelmas day, but kyng Arthur knewe hym not. Syre said Merlyn vnto the kynge, wil ye gyue me a yefte, wherfor said kyng Arthur shold I gyue the a yefte chorle. Sir said Merlyn ye were better to gyue me a yefte that is not in your hand than to lese grete rychesse, for here in the same place there the grete bataill was is grete tresour hyd in the erthe, who told the so chorle said Arthur. Merlyn told me so said he, thenne Ulfyus and Brastias knew hym wel ynough and smyled. Syre said these two knyghtes it is Merlyn that so speketh vnto yow, thenne kyng arthur was gretely abasshed and had merueyll of Merlyn, & so had kynge Ban and kynge Bors, and soo they had grete dysport at hym. Soo in the meane whyle there cam a damoysel that was an erlys doughter, his name was Sanam, and her name was Lyonors a passynge fair damoysel, and so she cam thyder for to do homage as other lordes dyd after the grete bataill. And kyng Arthur sette his loue gretely vpon her and so dyd she vpon hym, and the kyng had adoo with her, and gat on her a child, his name was Borre that was after a good knyghte and of the table round, thenne ther cam word that the kyng Ryence of Northen Walys maade grete werre on kynge Lodegreance of camylyard, for the whiche thyng arthur was wroth for he loued hym wel and hated kyng Ryence, for he was alwey ageynst hym. So by ordenaunce of the thre kynges that were sente home vnto Benwyck, alle they wold departe for drede of kynge Claudas and pharyaunce and Antemes and Grasians and lyonses, payarne with the leders of tho that shold kepe the kynges landys.

Capitulum xviii.

And thenne kynge Arthur and kynge Ban & kyng Bors departed with her felaushíp a xx M and came within vi dayes in to the countrey of Camyliarde, and there rescowed kynge Lodegreaunce and slewe ther moche people of kynge Ryence vnto the nombre of x M men and put hym to flyghte. And thenne had these thre kynges grete chere of kyng Lodegreaunce that thanked them of their grete goodnesse that they wold reuenge hym of his enemyes, and there hadde Arthur the fyrst syght of gweneuer the kynges doughter of Camylyard, and euer after he loued her. After they were weddyd as it telleth in the booke. Soo breuely to make an ende, they took theyr leue to goo in to theyre owne Countreyes for kynge Claudas dyd grete destruction on their landes. Thenne said Arthur I wille goo with yow. Nay said the kynges yè shalle not at this tyme, for ye haue moche to doo yet in these landes, therfore we wille departe, and with the grete goodes that we haue goten in these landes by youre yeftes we shalle wage good knyghtes & withstande the kynge Claudas malyce, for by the grace of god and we haue nede we wille sende to yow for youre socour. And yf ye haue nede sende for vs, and we wille not tary by the feythe of our bodyes. Hit shalle not saide Merlyn nede that these two kynges come ageyne in the wey of werre. But I knowe wel kynge Arthur maye not be longe from yow, for within a yere or two ye shalle haue grete nede. And thenne shalle he reuenge yow on youre enemyes as ye haue done on his. For these xi kynges shal deye all in a day by the grete myghte and prowesse of armes of ii valyaunt knyghtes as it telleth after, her names ben Balyn le Saueage and Balan his broder that ben merueillous good knyghtes as ben ony lyuyng.

Now torne we to the xi kynges that retorned vnto a cyte that hyghte Sorhaute, the whiche cyte was within kynge Uryens, and ther they refresshed hem as wel as they myght, and made leches serche theyr woundys and sorowed gretely for the dethe of her peple, with that ther came a messager and told how ther was comen in to their landes people that were laules as wel as sarasyns a xl M and haue

brent & slayne al the peple that they may come by withoute mercy, and haue leyd syege on the castel of Wādisborow. Allas sayd the xi kynges here is sorow vpon sorou. And yf we had not warryd ageynst Arthur as we haue done, he wold soone reuenge vs, as for kyng Lodegryaunce he loueth Arthur better than vs. And as for kyng Ryence, he hath ynough to doo with Lodegreans, for he hath leyd syege vnto hym. Soo they consentyd to gyder to kepe alle the marches of Cornewayle, of walys and of the northe, soo fyrst they putte kynge Idres in the Cyte of Nauntys in Brytayne with iiii thowsand men of armes, to watche bothe the water and the land. Also they put in the cyte of Wyndesan kynge Nauntres of garlott with four thousand knyghtes to watche both on water and on lond. Also they had of other men of werre moo than eyght thousand for to fortyfye alle the fortresses in the marches of Cornewaylle. Also they put moo knyztes in alle the marches of walys and scotland with many good men of armes, and soo they kepte hem to gyders the space of thre yere. And euer alyed hem with myghty kynges and dukes and lordes. And to them felle kynge Ryence of North walys, the whiche was a myghty man of men & Nero that was a mighty man of men. And all this whyle they furnysshed hem and garnysshed hem of good men of armes and vytaille and of alle maner of abylement that pretendith to the werre to auenge hem for the bataille of Bedegrayne, as it telleth in the book of auentures folowynge.

Capitulum xix.

Thēne after the departyng of kyng Ban and of kyng Bors kynge Arthur rode vnto Carlyon. And thyder cam to hym kyng Lots wyf of Orkeney in maner of a message, but she was sente thyder to aspye the Courte of kynge Arthur, and she cam rychely bisene with her four sones, gawayn, Gaherys, Agrauaynes, and Gareth with many other knyghtes and ladyes, for she was a passynge fayr lady, wherfore the kynge cast grete loue vnto her, and desyred to lye by her, so they were agreed, and he begate vpon her Mordred, and she

was his syster on the moder syde Igrayne. So ther she rested her a moneth and at the last departed. Thenne the kyng dremed a merueillous dreme wherof he was sore adrad. But al this tyme kyng Arthur knewe not that kyng Lots wyf was his syster. Thus was the dreme of Arthur, hym thought ther was come in to this land Gryffons and Serpentes. And hym thoughte they brente and slough alle the peple in the lād. And thenne hym thoughte, he faughte with hem, and they dyd hym passynge grete harme, and wounded hym ful sore, but at the last he slewe hem. Whanne the kynge awaked, he was passynge heuy of his dreme, and so to put it oute of thoughtes, he made hym redy with many knyghtes to ryde on huntynge. As soone as he was in the forest, the kynge sawe a grete hert afore hym, this herte wille I chace said kynge Arthur. And so he spored the hors, and rode after longe. And so by fyne force ofte he was lyke to haue smyten the herte, where as the kynge had chaced the herte soo long that his hors had loste hys brethe and fylle doune dede. Thenne a yoman fette the kynge another hors. So the kyng sawe the herte enbusshed and his hors dede, he sette hym doune by a fontayne and there he fell in grete thoughtes. And as he satte so hym thoughte he herd a noyse of houndes to the somme of xxx. And with that the kynge sawe comyng toward hym the straungest best that ever he sawe or herd of, so the best wente to the welle and drank, and the noyse was in the bestes bely lyke vnto the questyng of xxx coupyl houndes, but alle the whyle the beest dranke there was no noyse in the bestes bely, and therwith the best departed with a grete noyse, wherof the kyng had grete merueyll. And so he was in a grete thoughte, and therwith he fell on slepe. Ryght so ther came a knyght a foote vnto Arthur, and sayd knyght full of thought and slepy, telle me yf thow sawest a straunge best passe this waye. Suche one sawe I said kynge Arthur, that is past two myle, what wold ye with the best said arthur. Syre I haue folowed that best long tyme, and kyld myne hors, so wold god I had another to folowe my quest, ryzte so came one with the kynges hors, and whan the knyght sawe the hors, he prayd the kyng to yeue hym the hors, for I haue folowed this quest this xii moneth, and other I shal encheue hym or blede of the best blood of my body. Pellinore that tyme kynge

folowed the questynge best, and after his deth sir Palamydes folowed hit.

Capitulum xx.

Syr knyghte said the kynge leue that quest, and suffre me to haue hit, and I wyll folowe it another xii moneth. A foole said the knyghte vnto Arthur, it is in veyne thy desyre, for it shalle neuer ben encheued but by me, or my next kyn, there with he sterte vnto the kynges hors and mounted in to the sadel, and said gramercy this hors is myn owne, wel said the kynge thow mayst take myn hors by force but and I myzte preue the whether thow were better on hors-bak or I, wel said the knyght seke me here whan thow wolt and here nygh this wel thow shalt fynde me, and soo passyd on his weye. thenne the kyng sat in a study and bad his men fetche his hors as faste as euer they myghte. Ryght soo came by hym Merlyn lyke a child of xiiii yere of age and salewed the kyng, and asked hym why he was so pensyf. I may wel be pensyf sayd the kynge, for I haue sene the merueyllest syzt that euer I sawe, that knowe I wel said Merlyn as wel as thy self and of all thy thoughtes, but thow art but a foole to take thought, for it wylle not amend the. Also I knowe what thow arte, and who was thy fader, and of whome thow were begoten, kynge Utherpendragon was thy fader, and begat the on Igrayne, that is fals said kyng Arthur, how sholdest thou knowe it, for thow arte not so old of yeres to knowe my fader, yes sayd Merlyn I knowe it better than ye or ony man lyuynge. I wille not bileue the said Arthur and was wroth with the child. Soo departed Merlyn and came ageyne in the lykenes of an old man of iiii score yere of age, wherof the kynge was ryght glad, for he semed to be ryghte wyse.

Thenne saide the old man why are ye so sad. I maye wel be heuy said Arthur for many thynges. Also here was a chyld and told me many thynges that me semeth he shold not knowe, for he was not of age to knowe my fader, yes said the old man, the child told yow trouthe, and more wold he haue tolde yow and ye wolde

haue suffred hym. But ye haue done a thynge late that god is displeasyd with yow, for ye haue layne by your syster, and on her ye haue goten a chyld that shalle destroye yow and all the knyghtes of your realme. What are ye said Arthur that telle me these tydynges. I am Merlyn, and I was he in the childes lykenes. A said kyng Arthur ye are a merueillous man, but I merueylle moche, of thy wordes that I mote dye in bataille. Merueylle not said Merlyn, for it is gods wyll youre body to be punysshed for your fowle dedes, but I may wel be sory said Merlyn, for I shalle dye a shameful deth to be put in the erthe quyck, and ye shall dye a worshipful deth. And as they talked this, cam one with the kynges hors, and so the kyng mounted on his hors and Merlyn on another and so rode vnto Carlyon, & anone the kynge asked Ector and Ulfyus how he was bigoten, and they told hym Utherpendragon was his fader & quene Igrayn his moder, thenne he sayd to Merlyn I wylle that my moder be sente for that I may speke with her. And yf she saye so her self, thēne wylle I byleue hit. In all hast the quene was sente for, and she cam & broughte with her Morgan le fay her doughter that was as fayre a lady as ony myghte be, & the kynge welcomed Igrayne in the best maner.

Capitulum xxi.

Ryght soo cam Ulfyus & saide openly that the kynge and all myzt here that were fested that day, ye are the falsest lady of the world and the most traitresse vnto the kynges person. Beware saide Arthur what thow saist, thow spekest a grete word. I am wel ware said Ulfyus what I speke, & here is my gloue to preue hit vpon ony man that will seye the contrary, that this quene Igrayne is causar of your grete domage, & of your grete werre. For and she wold haue vtterd it in the lyf of kyng Utherpēdragon of the byrthe of yow, and how ye were begoten ye had neuer had the mortal werrys that ye haue had for the moost party of your barons of your realme knewe neuer whos sone ye were, nor of whome ye were begoten, & she that bare yow of her body shold haue made it knowen openly in

excusyng of her worship & yours, & in lyke wyse to alle the reame, wherfor I preue her fals to god and to yow and to al your realme and who wyll saye the contrary I wyll preue it on his body.

Thenne spak Igrayne and sayd I am a woman and I may not fyghte, but rather than I shold be dishonoured, ther wold some good man take my quarel. More she sayd, Merlyn knoweth wel and ye syr Ulfyus how kynge Uther cam to me in the Castel of Tyntagaill in the lykenes of my lord that was dede thre houres to fore, and therby gat a child that nyght upon me. And after the xiii day kynge Uther wedded me, and by his commaundement whan the child was borne it was delyuerd vnto Merlyn and nourysshed by hym, and so I sawe the child neuer after, nor wote not what is his name, for I knewe hym neuer yet. And there Ulfyus saide to the quene Merlyn is more to blame than ye, wel I wote said the quene I bare a child by my lord kyng Uther, but I wote not where he is become. thenne Merlyn toke the kynge by the hand sayeng, this is your moder, and therwith syr Ector bare wytnes how he nourysshed hym by Uthers commaundement. And ther with kynge Arthur toke his moder quene Igrayne in his armes and kyst her, and eyther wepte vpon other. And thenne the kyng lete make a feest that lasted eyght dayes. Thenne on a day ther come in the courte a squyer on hors bak ledynge a knyght before hym wounded to the dethe, and told hym how ther was a knyght in the forest had rered vp a pauelione by a well and hath slayne my mayster a good knyght, his name was mylis, wherfor I byseche yow that my mayster maye be buryed, and that somme knyzt maye reuenge my maysters deth. thenne the noyse was grete of that knyghtes dethe in the Court, and euery man said his aduys, thenne came Gryflett that was but a squyer, and he was but yonge of the age of the kyng Arthur, soo he besoughte the kyng for alle his seruyse that he had done hym to gyue hym the ordre of knyghthode.

Capitulum xxii.

THOU arte full yong and tendyr of age sayd Arthur for to take so hyghe an ordre on the. Sir said gryflet I byseche yow make me knyzt. Syr said Merlyn it were grete pyte to lese Gryflet, for he wille be a passynge good man, whanne he is of age, abydynge with you the terme of his lyf. And yf he auenture his body with yonder knyght at the fontayne it is in grete peryll yf euer he come ageyne, for he is one of the best knyghtes of the world, and the strēgyst man of armes, wel said Arthur, so at the desyre of gryflet the kynge made hym knyght. Now said Arthur vnto syre Gryflet, Sythen I haue made yow knyghte thow muste yeue me a gyfte, what ye will said Gryflet, thou shalt promyse me by the feythe of thy body whan thou hast Justed with the knyght at the fontayne, whether it falle ye be on foote or on hors bak, that ryght so ye shal come ageyne vnto me withoute makynge ony more debate. I wyll promyse yow said Gryflet as yow desyre. Thenne toke Gryflet his hors in grete haste, & dressyd his sheld and toke a spere in his hand and so he rode a grete wallop tyll he cam to the fontayne, and ther by he sawe a ryche pauelion, and ther by vnder a clothe stode a fayr hors wel sadeled and brydeled, and on a tree a shelde of dyuerse colours and a grete spere. Thenne Gryflet smote on the sheld with the bott of his spere that the shylde felle doune to the ground, with that the knyght cam oute of the pauelione, & sayd fair knyght why smote ye doun my sheld, for I wil Juste with yow said gryflet, it is better ye doo not sayd the knyghte, for ye are but yong and late made knyght, and your myghte is nothing to myn, as for that saide Gryflet I wylle Juste with yow, that is me loth said the knyght, but sythen I muste nedes I wille dresse me therto, of whens be ye sayd the knyzte, syre I am of Arthurs courte. So the two knyghtes ranne to gyder that ryflets spere al to sheuered, and ther with all he smote Gryflet thorowe the sheld & the lyfte syde, and brake the spere that the troncheon stack in his body, that hors and knyghte fylle doune.

Capitulum xxiii.

THAN the knyght sawe hym lye soo on the ground, he alyght and was passynge heuy, for he wende he had slayne hym, and thenne he vnlaced his helme and gate hym wynde, and so with the troncheon he set hym on his hors and gate hym wynde, and so bytoke hym to god, and seid he had a myghty hert and yf he myght lyue he wold preue a passynge good knyzt, & so syr Gryflet rode to the court where grete doole was made for hym. But thorowe good leches he was heled, and saued. Ryght so cam in to the Courte xii knyztes & were aged men, and they cam from themperour of Rome, & they asked of Arthur truage for this realme, other els themperour wold destroye hym & his land: Wel said kyng Arthur ye are messagers, therfor ye may say what ye wil other els ye shold dye therfore. But this is myn ansuer I owe themperour noo truage nor none will I hold hym, but on a fayr felde I shall yeue hym my truage that shal be with a sharp spere, or els with a sharp swerd, & that shall not be long by my faders soule Utherpendragon, & therwith the messagers departed passyngly wroth, & kyng arthur as wroth, for in euyl tyme cam they thenne, for the kyng was passyngly wroth for the hurte of sir Gryflet, & soo he commaunded a pryuy man of his chambre, that or hit be day his best hors and armour with all that longeth vnto his persone be withoute the cyte or to morowe daye. Ryght so or to morow day he met with his man and his hors and so mounted vp and dressid his sheld, & toke his spere and bad his chamberlayne tary there tyll he came ageyne.

And so Arthur roode a softe paas tyll it was day, & thenne was he ware of thre chorles chacynge Merlyn, and wold haue slayne hym, thenne the kyng rode vnto them, and bad them flee chorles, thenne were they aferd whan they sawe a knyght and fled. O Merlyn said Arthur, here haddest thou be slayne for all thy craftes had I not byn, Nay said Merlyn not soo, for I coude saue my self and I wold, and thou arte more nere thy deth than I am for thow gost to the deth ward & god be not thy frend. So as they wente thus talkyng, they came to the fontayne, and the ryche pauelione there by hit, thenne

kyng Arthur was ware where sat a knyght armed in a chayer. Syr knyght said Arthur, for what cause abydest thow here that ther maye no knyght ryde this wey but yf he Juste wyth the said the kyng, I rede the leue that custome said Arthur. This customme saide the knyght haue I vsed and wille use magre who saith nay, & who is greued with my custome, lete hym amende hit that wol. I wil amende it said Arthur. I shal defende the sayd the knyzt, anon he toke his hors & dressid his shylde & toke a spere & they met so hard either in others sheldes that al to sheuered their sperys, ther with anone Arthur pulled oute his swerd, nay not so said the knyght, it is fayrer sayd the knyzt that we tweyne renne more to gyders with sharp sperys. I wille wel said Arthur and I had ony mo sperys. I haue ynow said the knyzt, so ther cam a squyer and brouzt ii good sperys, and Arthur chose one & he another, so they spored their horses & cam to gyders with al the myghtes, that eyther brak her speres to her handes, thenne Arthur sette hand on his swerd, nay seid the knyght, ye shal do better, ye are a passynge good Juster as euer I mette with al, & ones for the loue of the hyghe ordre of knyzthode lete vs Juste ones ageyn. I assente me said Arthur. anone there were brought two grete sperys, and euery knyght gat a spere, and therwith they ranne to gyders that Arthurs spere al to sheuered. But the other knyghte hyt hym so hard in myddes of the shelde, that horse & man felle to the erthe, and ther with Arthur was ẽgre & pulled oute his swerd, and said I will assay the syr knyghte on foote, for I haue lost the honour on horsbak. I will be on horsbak said the knyght, thene was Arthur wrothe and dressid his sheld toward hym with his swerd drawen, whan the knyght sawe that, he alyghte, for hym thought no worship to haue a knyght at suche auaille he to be on horsbak and he on foot, and so he alyght & dressid his sheld vnto Arthur & ther begā a strong bataille with many grete strokes, & soo hewe with her swerdes that the cantels flewe in the feldes, and moche blood they bledde both, that al the place there as they faught was ouer bledde with blood, and thus they fought long and rested hem, and thenne they wente to the batayl ageyne, and so hurtled to gyders lyke two rammes that eyther felle to the erthe. So at the last they smote to gyders that both her swerdys met euen to gyders. But

the swerd of the knyght smote kyng arthurs swerd in two pyeces, wherfor he was heuy. thenne said the knyghte vnto Arthur, thow arte in my daunger whether me lyst to saue the or slee the, and but thou yelde the as ouercome and recreaunt, thow shalt deye, as for deth said kyng arthur welcome be it whan it cometh. But to yelde me vnto the as recreaunt I had leuer deye than to be soo shamed. And ther with al the kynge lepte vnto Pellinore & tooke hym by the myddel and threwe hym doune and raced of his helme. Whan the knyght felt that, he was adrad, for he was a passynge bygge man of myghte, and anone he broughte Arthur vnder hym, and reaced of his helme and wold haue smyten of his hede.

Capitulum xxiiii.

Ther with all came Merlyn and sayd knyghte, hold thy hand. For and thow slee that knyghte thow puttest this reame in the grettest dammage that euer was reame. For this knyght is a man of more worship than thou wotest of. Why, who is he said the knyghte, it is kyng Arthur. Thenne wold he haue slayn hym for drede of his wrathe, and heue vp his swerd, and therwith Merlyn cast an enchanntement to the knyghte that he felle to the erthe in a grete slepe. Thenne Merlyn tooke vp kyng Arthur and rode forth on the knyztes hors. Allas said Arthur what hast thou done merlyn, hast thow slayne this good knyghte by thy craftes, there lyueth not soo worshipful a knyghte as he was. I had leuer than the stynte of my land a yere that he were on lyue, care ye not sayd Merlyn, for he is holer than ye, for he is but on slepe and will awake within thre houres. I told you said Merlyn what a knyghte he was. Here had ye be slayn had I not ben. Also ther lyueth not a bygger knyght than he is one, and he shal here after do yow ryght good seruyse & his name is Pellinore, and he shal haue two sones that shal be passyng good men sauf one, they shalle haue no felawe of prowesse and of good lyuynge, and her names shal be Persyual of walys, & Lamerak of walis, & he shal telle yow the name of your own sone begoten of your syster that shal be the destruction of alle this royame.

Capitulum xxb.

RYGHTE so the kyng and he departed & wente un tyl an ermyte that was a good man & a grete leche. Soo the heremyte serched all his woundys & gaf hym good salues, so the kyng was there thre dayes & thenne were his woundes wel amendyd that he myght ryde and goo, & so departed, & as they rode Arthur said I haue no swerd, no force said Merlyn here by is a swerd that shalle be yours and I may. Soo they rode tyl they came to a lake the whiche was a fayr water, and brood. And in the myddes of the lake Arthur was ware of an arme clothed in whyte samyte, that held a fayr swerd in that hand, loo said Merlyn yonder is that swerd that I spak of, with that they sawe a damoisel goyng vpon the lake, what damoysel is that said Arthur, that is the lady of the lake said Merlyn. And within that lake is a roche, and theryn is as fayr a place as ony on erthe and rychely besene, and this damoysell wylle come to yow anone, and thenne speke ye fayre to her that she will gyue yow that swerd. Anone with all came the damoysel vnto Arthur, and salewed hym, and he her ageyne. Damoysel said Arthur, what swerd is that, that yonder the arme holdeth aboue the water. I wold it were myne, for I haue no swerd. Syr Arthur kynge said the damoysell, that swerd is myn, And yf ye will gyue me a yefte whan I aske it yow, ye shal haue it by my feyth said Arthur. I will yeue yow what yefte ye will aske, wel said the damoisel go ye in to yonder barge, & rowe your self to the swerd, and take it, and scaubart with yow, & I will aske my yefte whan I see my tyme. So syr Arthur & merlyn alyght & tayed their horses to two trees, & so they went in to the ship, & whanne they came to the swerd that the hand held, syre Arthur toke it vp by the handels, & toke it with hym, & the arme & the hād went vnder the water, & so come vnto the lond & rode forth, & thēne syr Arthur sawe a ryche pauelion, what sygnyfyeth yōder pauelion, y^t is y^e knyztes pauelion seid merlyn y^t ye fouzt with last, syr Pellinore, but he is out, he is not there, he hath a doo with a knyght of yours that hyght Egglame, & they haue fouzten to gyder, but at the last Egglame fledde and els he had ben dede, & he hath chaced hym

euen to Carlyon, and we shal mete with hym anon in the hygh wey, that is wel sayd, said Arthur, now haue I a swerd, now wille I wage bataill with hym & be auenged on hym, sir ye shal not so said Merlyn, for the knyght is wery of fyghtyng & chacyng so that ye shal haue no worship to haue a do with hym. Also he will not be lyztly matched of one knyzt lyuyng, & therfor it is my counceil, lete hym passe, for he shal do you good seruyse in shorte tyme & his sones after his dayes. Also ye shal see that day in short space ye shal be rizt glad to yeue hym your sister to wedde whan I see hym I wil doo as ye aduyse me sayd Arthur. Thenne syre Arthur loked on the swerd, and lyked it passynge wel, whether lyketh yow better sayd Merlyn the suerd or the scaubard. Me lyketh better the swerd sayd Arthur, ye are more unwyse sayd Merlyn, for the scaubard is worth x of the swerdys, for whyles ye haue the scaubard vpon yow ye shalle neuer lese no blood, be ye neuer so sore wounded therfor kepe wel the scaubard alweyes with yow, so they rode vnto Carlyon, and by the wey they met with syr Pellinore, but Merlyn had done suche a crafte, that pellinore sawe not Arthur, and he past by withoute ony wordes. I merueylle sayd Arthur that the knyght wold not speke, syr said Merlyn, he sawe yow not, for and he had sene yow ye had not lyghtly departed. Soo they come vnto Carlyon, wherof his knyghtes were passynge glad. And whanne they herd of his aventures, they merueilled that he wold ieoparde his persone soo alone. But alle men of worship said it was mery to be vnder suche a chyuetayne that wolde put his persone in auenture as other poure knyghtes dyd.

Capitulum xxvii.

This meane whyle came a messager from kynge Ryons of Northwalys. And kynge he was of all Ireland and of many Iles. And this was his message gretynge wel kynge Arthur in this manere wyse sayenge, that kynge Ryons had discomfyte and ouercome xi kynges, and everyche of hem did hym homage, and that was this, they gaf hym their berdys clene flayne of, as moche as ther was, wherfor the

messager came for kyng Arthurs berd. For kyng Ryons had purfyled a mantel with kynges berdes, and there lacked one place of the mantel, wherfor he sente for his berd or els he wold entre in to his landes, and brenne and slee, & neuer leue tyl he haue the hede and the berd. Wel sayd Arthur thow hast said thy message, the whiche is the most vylaynous and lewdest message that euer man herd sente vnto a kynge. Also thow mayst see, my berd is ful yong yet to make a purfyl of hit. But telle thow thy kynge this, I owe hym none homage, ne none of myn elders, but or it be longe to, he shall do me homage on bothe his kneys, or els he shall lese his hede by the feith of my body, for this is the most shamefullest message that euer I herd speke of. I haue aspyed, thy kyng met neuer yet with worshipful man, but telle hym, I wyll haue his hede withoute he doo me homage, thenne the messager departed.

Now is there ony here said Arthur that knoweth kyng Ryons, thenne ansuerd a knyght that hyght Naram. Syre I knowe the kynge wel, he is a passyng good man of his body, as fewe ben lyuynge, and a passyng prowde man, and sir doubte ye not, he wille make warre on yow with a myghty puyssaunce, wel said Arthur I shall ordeyne for hym in short tyme.

Capitulum xxviii.

THĒNE kyng arthur lete sende for al the childrē born on may day begotē of lordes & born of ladyes, for Merlyn told kynge Arthur that he that shold destroye hym, shold be borne in may day, wherfor he sent for hem all vpon payn of deth, and so ther were founde many lordes sones, and all were sente vnto the kynge, and soo was Mordred sente by kyng Lotts wyf, and all were put in a ship to the see, and some were iiii wekes old and some lasse. And so by fortune the shyp drofe vnto a castel and was al to ryuen and destroyed the most part sauf that Mordred was cast vp and a good man fonde hym, and nourysshed hym tyl he was xiiii yere olde, & thenne he brought hym to the Court, as it reherceth afterward toward the ende of the deth of Arthur. So many lordes and barons of this reame were

displeasyd, for her children were so lost, and many put the wyte on Merlyn more than on Arthur, so what for drede and for loue they helde their pees. But whanne the messager came to kynge Ryons, thenne was he woode oute of mesure and purueyed hym for a grete hoost as it rehercyth after in the book of Balyn le saueage that foloweth next after, how by aduenture Balyn gat the swerd.

Explicit liber primus.

Incipit liber secundus.

AFTER the dethe of Utherpendragon regned Arthur his sone, the whiche had grete werre in his dayes for to gete al Englond in to his hand. For there were many kynges within the realme of Englond and in Walys, Scotland and Cornewaille. Soo it befelle on a tyme, whanne kyng Arthur was at London ther came a knyght and tolde the kynge tydynges how that the kynge Ryons of Northwalys had rered a grete nombre of peple, and were entryd in to the land and brente and slewe the kynges true liege peple, yf this be true said Arthur, it were grete shame vnto myn estate, but that he were myghtely withstand, it is trouthe sayd the knyghte, for I sawe the hoost my self. Wel saide the kynge, lete make a crye, that all the lordes knyghtes and gentylmen of armes shold drawe vnto a castel called Camelot in tho dayes, and ther the kynge wold lete make a counceil general and a grete Justes. So whan the kynge was come thyder with all his baronage and lodged as they semed best, ther was come a damoisel the whiche was sente on message from the grete lady lylle of auelyon. And whan she came bifore kynge Arthur, she told from whome she came, and how she was sent on message

vnto hym for these causes. Thenne she lete her mantel falle that was rychely furred. And thenne was she gyrd with a noble swerd wherof the kynge had merueill, and said Damoysel for what cause are ye gyrd with that swerd, it bisemeth yow not. Now shall I telle yow said the damoysel: This swerd that I am gyrd with al doth me grete sorowe and comberaunce, for I may not be delyuerd of this swerd, but by a knyghte, but he must be a passyng good man of his handes and of his dedes and withoute vylonye or trecherye and withoute treason. And yf I may fynde suche a knyghte that hath alle these vertues, he may drawe oute this swerd oute of the shethe, for I haue ben at kyng Ryons, it was told me ther were passyng good knyghtes, and he and alle his knyghtes haue assayed it and none can spede. This is a grete merueill said Arthur, yf this be sothe, I wille my self assaye to drawe oute the swerd, not presumynge vpon my self that I am the best knyghte, but that I will begynne to drawe at your swerd in gyuyng example to alle the Barons that they shall assay euerychone after other whan I haue assayed it. Thenne Arthur toke the swerd by the shethe and by the gyrdel and pulled at it egrely, but the swerd wold not oute. Sire seid the damoysell ye nede not to pulle half so hard, for he that shall pulle it out shal do it with lytel myghte, ye say wel said Arthur. Now assaye ye al my barons, but beware ye be not defoyled with shame trechery ne gyle, thenne it wille not auaylle sayd the damoysell, for he must be a clene knyght withoute vylony and of a gentil strene of fader syde and moder syde. Moost of all the barons of the round table that were there at that tyme assayed alle by rowe, but ther myght none spede, wherfor the damoysel made grete sorow oute of mesure and sayd Allas I wende in this Courte had ben the best knyghtes withoute trechery or treson. By my feythe sayth Arthur here are good knyghtes as I deme as ony ben in the world, but theyr grace is not to helpe yow, wherfor I am displeasyd.

Capitulum ii.

THENNE felle hit soo that tyme, ther was a poure knyght with kynge Arthur, that had byn prysoner with hym half a yere & more for sleynge of a knyghte, the whiche was cosyn vnto kynge Arthur, the name of this knyght was called Balen, and by good meanes of the barons he was delyuerd oute of pryson, for he was a good man named of his body, and he was borne in northumberland, and soo he wente pryuely in to the Courte, and sawe this aduenture, wherof hit reysed his herte, and wolde assaye it as other knyghtes dyd, but for he was poure and pourely arayed he put hym not ferre in prees. But in his herte he was fully assured to doo as wel yf his grace happed hym as ony knyght that there was. And as the damoysel toke her leue of Arthur and of alle the barons so departyng, this knyght Balen called vnto her and sayd Damoysel I praye yow of your curtosy, suffre me as wel to assay as these lordes though that I be so pourely clothed, in my herte me semeth I am fully assured as somme of these other. And me semeth in my herte to spede ryght wel. The damoysel beheld the poure knyght, and sawe he was a lykely man, but for his poure arrayment she thoughte he shold be of no worship withoute vylonye or trechery. And thene she sayd vnto the knyght, sir it nedeth not to put me to more payn or labour, for it semeth not yow to spede there as other haue failled. A fayr Damoysel said Balen worthynes and good tatches and good dedes are not only in arrayment, but manhood and worship is hyd within mans persone and many a worshipful knyghte is not knowen vnto alle people, and therfore worship and hardynesse is not in arayment. By god sayd the damoysel ye say sothe, therfor ye shal assaye to do what ye may. Thenne Balen took the swerd by the gyrdel and shethe, and drewe it out easyly, and when he loked on the swerd hit pleasyd hym moche, thenne had the kynge and alle the barons grete merueille that Balen hadde done that auenture, many knyghtes had grete despyte of Balen. Certes said the damoysel, this is a passynge good knyght and the best that euer I found and moost of worship withoute treson, trechery or vylony, and many merueylles shalle he

do. Now gentyl and curtois knyght yeue me the swerd ayene, nay said Balen, for this swerd wylle I kepe but it be taken from me with force, wel saide the damoysel ye are not wyse to kepe the swerd from me, for ye shalle slee with the swerd the best frende that ye haue and the man that ye moste loue in the world, and the swerd shalle be your destruction. I shal take the aduenture sayd Balen that god wille ordeyne me, but the swerd ye shalle not haue at this tyme by the feythe of my body, ye shalle repente hit within short tyme sayd the damoysel. For I wold haue the swerd more for your auaylle than for myne, for I am passyng heuy for your sake. For ye wil not byleue that swerd shal be youre destruction, and that is grete pyte, with that the damoysel departed makynge grete sorowe. Anone after Balen sente for his hors and armour, and soo wold departe fro the Courte and toke his leue of kynge Arthur, nay sayd the kynge I suppose ye wyll not departe so liztely fro this felauship. I suppose ye are displeased that I haue shewed yow unkyndenes. Blame me the lasse, for I was mys senformed ageynst yow, but I wende ye had not ben suche a knyght as ye are of worship and prowesse, and yf ye wyll abyde in this courte among my felauship, I shalle so auaunce yow as ye shalle be pleased, god thanke your hyhenes said Balen, your bounte and hyhenes may no man preyse half to the valewe, but at this tyme I must nedes departe, besechyng yow alwey of your good grace. Truly said the kynge I am ryght wrothe for your departyng. I pray yow faire knyghte, that ye tary not long, and ye shal be ryght welcome to me, & to my barons, and I shalle amende all mysse that I haue done ageynst yow. god thanke your grete lordship said Balen, and therwith made hym redy to departe. Thenne the moost party of the knyghtes of the round table sayd that Balen did not this auenture al only by myghte but by wytchecraft.

Capitulum Tercium.

The meane whyle that this knyght was makyng hym redy to departe, there came in to the Court a lady that hyght the lady of the lake. And she came on horsbak rychely bysene, and salewed kynge

Arthur, and there asked hym a yefte that he promysed her whan she gaf hym the swerd, that is sothe said Arthur, a gyfte I promysed yow, but I haue forgoten the name of my swerd that ye gaue me. The name of it said the lady is Excalibur that is as moche to say as cut stele, ye saye wel saide the kynge. Aske what ye wil and ye shall haue it, and hit lye in my power to yeue hit, wel sayd the lady, I aske the heede of the knyghte that hath wonne the swerd, or els the damoysels heede that broughte hit. I take no force though I haue bothe their hedes, for he slewe my broder a good knyzte and a true, and that gentilwoman was causar of my faders deth. Truly said kynge Arthur I maye not graunte neyther of her hedes with my worship, therfor aske what ye wille els, and I shall fulfille your desyre. I wil aske none other thyng said the lady. Whan Balyn was redy to departe he sawe the lady of the lake that by her menes had slayne Balyns moder and he had soughte her thre yeres, and whan it was told hym that she asked his hede of kynge Arthur he went to her streyte and said euyl be you foūde, ye wold haue my hede, and therfore ye shall lese yours, and with hys swerd lyghtly he smote of hir hede before kynge Arthur. allas for shame sayd Arthur why haue ye done so, ye haue shamed me and al my Courte, for this was a lady that I was beholden to, and hyther she came vnder my sauf conduyte. I shalle neuer foryeue you that trespas. Sir said Balen me forthynketh of your displeasyr, for this same lady was the untruest lady lyuynge, and by enchauntement and sorssery she hath ben the destroyer of many good knyghtes, and she was causer that my moder was brente thorow her falshede and trechery. What cause soo euer ye had said Arthur ye shold haue forborne her in my presence, therfor thynke not the contrary ye shalle repente it, for suche another despyte had I neuer in my Courte, therfor withdrawe yow oute of my Courte in al hast that ye may. Thenne Balen toke vp the heed of the lady and bare it with hym to his hostry, and there he met with his squyer that was sory he had displeasyd kyng Arthur, and so they rode forth oute of the town. Now said Balen we must departe, take thow this hede and bere it to my frendys, and telle hem how I haue sped, and telle my frendys in Northumberland that my most foo is deed. Also telle hem how I am oute of pryson, and

what auẽture befelle me at the getyng of this swerd. Allas said the squyar ye are gretely to blame for to displease kyng Arthur, as for that said Balen I wylle hyhe me in al the hast that I may to mete with kynge Ryons and destroye hym eyther els to dye therfor, and yf it may happe me to wynne hym, thenne wille kynge Arthur be my good and gracious lord. Where shall I mete with yow saide the squyer, in kynge Arthurs Court said Balen, so his squyer and he departed at that tyme, thenne kynge Arthur and alle the Court made grete doole and had shame of the deth of the lady of the lake, thenne the kyng buryed her rychely.

Capitulum xiiii.

At that tyme ther was a knyghte, the whiche was the kynges sone of Irelond and his name was Launceor, the whiche was an orgulous knyzt, and counted hym self one of the best of the Courte, and he had grete despyte at Balen for the encheuynge of the swerd that ony shold be acounted more hardy or more of prowesse, and he asked kynge Arthur yf he wold gyue hym leue to ryde after Balen and to reuenge the despyte that he had done. Doo your best said Arthur, I am right wroth with Balen, I wold he were quyte of the despyte that he hath done to me and to my Courte. Thenne this Launceor wente to his hostry to make hym redy. In the meane whyle cam Merlyn vntó the Court of kyng Arthur and there was told hym the aduenture of the swerd and the deth of the lady of the lake. Now shall I saye yow said Merlyn, this same damoysel that here standeth that broughte the swerde vnto your Court, I shalle telle yow the cause of her comynge, she was the falsest damoysel that lyueth, say not so said they. She hath a broder a passynge good knyght of prowesse and a ful true man, and this damoysel loued another knyght that helde her to peramour, and this good knyght her broder mett with the knyght that held her to peramour and slewe hym by force of his handes. Whan this fals damoysel vnderstood thys, she wente to the lady lyle of Auelione, and besought her of help, to be auengyd on her owne broder.

Capitulum quintum.

And so this lady lyle of Auelion toke her this swerd that she broughte with her, and told there shold noo man pulle it oute of the shethe but yf he be one of the best knyghtes of this reame, and he shold be hard and ful of prowesse, and with that swerd he shold slee her broder, this was the cause that the damoysel came in to this Courte. I knowe it as wel as ye, wolde god she had not comen in to thys Courte, but she came neuer in felaushyp of worship to do good but alweyes grete harme, and that knyght that hath encheued the suerd shal be destroyed by that suerd, for the whiche wil be grete dommage, for ther lyueth not a knyzt of more prowesse than he is, and he shalle do vnto yow my lord Arthur grete honour and kyndenesse, and it is grete pyte he shall not endure but a whyle, for of his strengthe and hardynesse I knowe not his matche lyuynge. Soo the knynght of Irelonde armed hym at al poyntes, and dressid his shelde on his sholder and mounted vpon horsback and toke his spere in his hand, and rode after a grete paas as moche as his hors myght goo, and within a lytel space on a montayne he had a syghte of Balyn, and with a lowde voys he cryed abyde knyght, for ye shal abyde whether ye will or nyll, and the sheld that is to fore you shalle not helpe. Whan Balyn herd the noyse, he tourned his hors fyersly, and saide faire knyghte what wille ye with me, wille ye Juste with me, ye said the Irysshe knyghte, therfor come I after yow, perauenture said Balyn it had ben better to haue hold yow at home, for many a man weneth to putte his enemy to a rebuke, and ofte it falleth to hym self, of what courte be ye sente fro said Balyn. I am come fro the Courte of kynge Arthur sayd the knyghte of Irlond, that come hyder for to reuenge the despyte ye dyd this day to kyng arthur and to his courte. Wel said Balyn, I see wel I must haue adoo with yow that me forthynketh for to greue kyng arthur or ony of his courte, and your quarel is ful symple said Balyn vnto me, for the lady that is dede, dyd me grete dommage & els wold I haue ben lothe as ony knyghte that lyueth for to slee a lady. Make yow redy sayd the knyght launceor, and dresse yow vnto me, for that one shalle abyde

in the feld, thenne they toke their speres, and cam to gyders as moche as their horses myght dryue, and the Irysshe knyght smote Balyn on the sheld that alle wente sheuers of his spere, & Balyn hyt hym thorugh the sheld, and the hauberk perysshed, & so percyd thurgh his body and the hors croppe, and anon torned his hors fyersly and drewe oute his swerd and wyste not that he had slayn hym, and thenne he sawe hym lye as a dede corps.

Capitulum vi.

THENNE he loked by hym and was ware of a damoysel that came ryde ful fast as the hors myghte ryde on a fayr palfroy, and whan she aspyed that launceor was slayne, she made sorowe oute of mesure and sayd, O Balyn two bodyes thou hast slayne and one herte and two hertes in one body, and two soules thow hast lost. And therwith she toke the swerd from her loue that lay ded and fylle to the ground in a swowne. And whan she aroos she made grete dole out of mesure, the whiche sorowe greued Balyn passyngly sore, and he wente vnto her for to haue taken the swerd oute of her hād but she helde it so fast, he myghte not take it oute of her hand onles he shold haue hurte her, and sodenly she sette the pomell to the ground, and rofe her self thorow the body. Whan balyn aspyed her dedes he was passynge heuy in his herte and ashamed that so fair a damoysell had destroyed her self for the loue of his deth. Allas said Balyn me repēteth sore the deth of this knyght for the loue of this damoysel, for ther was moche true loue betwixe them bothe, and for sorowe myght not lenger behold hym but torned his hors and loked toward a grete forest and ther he was ware by the armes of his broder Balan, and whan they were mette they putte of her helmes and kyssed to gyders and wepte for ioye and pyte. Thenne Balan sayd, I lytel wende to haue met with yow at this sodayne auenture. I am ryght glad of your delyueraunce and of youre dolorous prysonement, for a mā told me in the castel of four stones that ye were delyuerd, & that man had sene you in the court of kynge Arthur, & therfor I cam hyder in to this countrey, for here I supposed to fynde you,

anon the knyzt balyn told his broder of his aduenture of the swerd & of the deth of the lady of the lake, & how kyng arthur was displeasyd with hym wherfor he sente this knyzt after me that lyeth here dede, & the dethe of this damoysel greueth me sore, so doth it me said Balan, but ye must take the aduenture that god wil ordeyne yow. Truly said Balyn I am ryght heuy that my lord Arthur is displeasyd with me, for he is the moost worshipful knyght that regneth now on erthe, & his loue will I gete or els I wil put my lyf in auenture, for the kyng Ryons lyeth at a syege atte castel Tarabil & thyder will we drawe in all hast to preue our worship & prowesse vpon hym. I wil wel said Balan that we do & we wil helpe eche other as bretheren ouzt to do.

Ca. vii.

Now go we hens said balyn & wel be we met, the mene whyle as they talked ther cam a dwarf from the cyte of camelot on horsbak as moche as he myght & foūd the dede bodyes, wherfor he made grete dole & pulled out his here for sorou & saide which of you knyztes haue done this dede, where by askest thou it said balan, for I wold wete it said the dwarfe, it was I said balyn that slewe this knyght in my defendaūt for hyder he cam to chaace me & other I must slee hym or he me, & this damoysel slewe her self for his loue whiche repenteth me, & for her sake I shal owe al wymmen the better loue. Allas said the dwarf thow hast done grete dommage vnto thy self, for this knyght that is here dede was one of the most valyaunts men that lyued, and trust wel balyn the kynne of this knyght wille chace yow thorowe the world tyl they haue slayne yow. As for that sayd Balyn I fere not gretely, but I am ryght heuy that I haue displeasyd my lord kyng arthur for the deth of this knyght. Soo as they talked to gyders there came a kynge of Cornewaille rydynge, the whiche hyghte kynge Mark. And whanne he sawe these two bodyes dede and vnderstood hou they were dede by the ii knyghtes aboue saide, thenne maade the kynge grete sorowe for the true loue that was betwix them, & said I wil not departe tyl I haue on this erthe made a tombe, and

there he pyght his pauelions and soughte thurgh alle the countrey to fynde a tombe, and in a chirche they found one was fair and ryche, & thenne the kynge lete put hem bothe in the erthe & put the tombe vpon hem, and wrote the names of them bothe on the tombe. How here lyeth launceor the kynges sone of Irlond that at his owne request was slayne by the handes of balyn, & how his lady colombe and peramoure slewe her self with her loues swerd for dole and sorowe.

Capitulum viii.

THE mene whyle as this was a doyng, in cam merlyn to kyng mark seyng alle his doynge said, Here shalle be in this same place the grettest bataille betwixt two knyghtes that was or euer shall be, and the truest louers, and yet none of hem shalle slee other, and there Merlyn wrote her names vpon the tombe with letters of gold that shold fyghte in that place, whos names were Launcelot de lake, and Trystram. thow art a merueillous man saide kynge Marke vnto Merlyn that spekest of suche merueilles, thou art a boystous man and an vnlykely to telle of suche dedes, what is thy name said kynge Marke, at this tyme said Merlyn I will not telle, but at that tyme whan syr Trystram is taken with his souerayne lady, thenne ye shalle here and knowe my name, & at that tyme ye shal here tydynges that shal not please yow. Thenne said merlyn to balyn thou hast done thy self grete hurt by cause that thow sauest not this lady that slewe her self that myght haue saued her & thow woldest, by the feyth of my body sayd balyn I myght not saue her for she slewe her self sodenly. Me repenteth saide Merlyn by cause of the dethe of that lady thou shalt stryke a stroke most dolorous that euer man stroke excepte the stroke of oure lorde, for thou shalt hurte the truest knyzt & the man of most worship that now lyueth, & thorow that stroke iii kyngdoms shal be in grete pouerte mysere & wretchidnes xii yere, & the knyzt shal not be hool of that woūd many yeres. thenne merlyn toke his leue of balyn & balen said yf I wist it were soth that ye say I shold do suche a peryllous dede as that I wold slee my self to make the a lyar, therwith merlyn vanysshed awey sodenly, and

thenne balyn and his broder toke her leue of kynge Mark, fyrst said the kynge telle me your name, syr said Balen ye may see he bereth two swerdes ther by ye may calle hym the knyght with the two swerdes & soo departed kyng marke vnto camelot to kynge Arthur & balyn toke the wey toward kyng Ryons, and as they rode to gyder they mett with Merlyn desguysed but they knewe hym not. Whyder ryde yow said Merlyn, we haue lytel to do saide the ii knyztes to tell the, but what is thy name said Balen, at this tyme said Merlyn I will not telle it the, it is euyl sene said the knyghtes that thou art a true man that thou wolt not telle thy name, as for that sayd Merlyn, be hit, as it be may I can telle yow wherfor ye ryde this wey for to mete kyng Ryons but it will not auaille you without ye haue my counceill. A said Balyn ye are Merlyn we wyl be rulyd by your coũceill, come on said Merlyn ye shal haue grete worship & loke that ye do knyztely for ye shal haue grete nede, as for that said Balen drede yow not we will do what we may.

Capitulum ix.

Thenne Merlyn lodged them in a wode amonge leuys besyde the hyhe way & toke of the brydels of their horses & put hem to gras & leid hem doun to reste hem tylle it was nyhe mydnyzt. Thenne Merlyn badde hem ryse, & make hem redy, for the kynge was nygh them that was stolen awey from his hoost with a iii score horses of his best knyztes & xx of hem rode to fore to warne the lady de Vance that the kyng was comyng, for that nyzt kyng Ryons shold haue layn with her, whiche is the kyng said Balyn, abyde said Merlyn here in a streyte wey ye shal mete with hym & therwith he shewed Balyn & his broder where he rode, anon balyn & his broder mette with the kyng & smote hym doune & wounded hym fyersly & leid hym to the ground, & there they slewe on the ryght hand & the lyfte hand and slewe moo then xl of his men, & the remenaunt fled, thenne went they ageyne to kyng Ryons & wold haue slayn hym had he not yelded hym vnto her grace. Thenne said he thus knyghtes ful of prowesse slee me not, for by my lyf ye may wynne & by my dethe

ye shalle wynne noo thynge. Thenne sayd these two knyghtes ye say sothe & trouth, and so leyd hym on an hors lyttar. With that Merlyn was vanysshed and came to kyng Arthur afore hand & told hym how his most enemy was taken and discomfyted, by whome said kynge Arthur, by two knyghtes said Merlyn that wold please your lordship, and to morowe ye shalle knowe what knyghtes they are. Anone after cam the knyght with the two swerdes and balan his broder, and brought with hem kynge Ryons of North Walys and there delyuerd hym to the porters and charged hem with hym, & soo they two retorned ageyne in the daunyng of the day, kynge Arthur cam thenne to kyng Ryons and said Syr kynge ye are welcome, by what auenture come ye hyder, syr said kyng Ryons I cam hyther by an hard auenture, who wanne yow said kyng Arthur, syre said the kyng the knyght with the two swerdes & his broder whiche are two merueillous knyghtes of prowesse. I knowe hem not sayd arthur but moche I am beholden to them. A said merlyn I shal telle yow it is balen that encheued the swerd & his broder balan a good knyght, ther lyueth not a better of prowesse & of worthynesse, and it shal be the grettest dole of hym that euer I knewe of knyght, for he shalle not long endure. Allas saide kynge Arthur that is grete pyte for I am moche beholdyng vnto hym, & I haue yll deserued it vnto hym for his kyndenes, nay said Merlyn he shal do moche more for yow, and that shal ye knowe in hast, but syr are ye purueyed said Merlyn for to morne the hooste of Nero kynge Ryons broder wille sette on yow or none with a grete hoost and therfor make yow redy for I wyl departe from yow.

Capitulum x.

Thenne kyng Arthur made redy his hoost in x batails and Nero was redy in the felde afore the castel Tarabil with a grete hoost, & he had x batails with many mo peple than Arthur had. Thenne Nero had the vaward with the moost party of his peple, & merlyn cam to kyng lot of the yle of Orkeney, and helde hym with a tale of prophecye til Nero and his peple were destroyed, & ther syr kay the

sencyal dyd passyngly wel that the dayes of his lyf the worship went neuer frō hym & sir heruys de reuel did merueillous dedes with kynge Arthur, and kynge Arthur slewe that daye xx knyghtes & maymed xl. At that tyme cam in the knyzte with the two swerdys and his broder Balan. But they two did so merueillously that the kynge and alle the knyghtes merueilled of them, and alle they that behelde them said they were sente from heuen as aungels or deuyls from helle, & kynge Arthur said hymself they were the best knyghtes that euer he sawe, for they gaf suche strokes that all men had wōder of hem. In the meane whyle came one to kynge Lott and told hym, whyle he taryed there nero was destroyed and slayne with al his peple. Allas sayd kynge Lot I am ashamed, for by my defaute ther is many a worshipful man slayne, for and we had ben to gyders there hadde ben none hooste vnder the heuen that had ben able for to haue matched with vs. This fayter with his prophecye hath mocked me. Al that dyd Merlyn for he knewe wel that and kyng Lot had ben with his body there at the fyrst bataille, kynge Arthur had be slayne, and alle his peple destroyed, & wel Merlyn knewe the one of the kynges shold be dede that day, & loth was Merlyn that ony of them both sholde be slayne. But of the tweyne, he had leuer kyng Lotte had be slayne than kynge Arthur. Now what is best to doo sayd kyng Lot of Orkeney whether is me better to treate with kynge Arthur or to fyghte, for the gretter party of oure peple are slayne and destroyed. Syr said a knyght set on arthur for they are wery and forfoughten and we be fresshe. As for me sayd kyng Lot I wolde euery knyght wolde do his parte as I wold doo myn. And thenne they auaunced baners and smoten to gyders and al to sheuered their speres, and arthurs knyghtes with the helpe of the knyght with two swerdes & his broder balan put kyng lot & his hoost to the werre. But alweyes kyng Lot helde hym in the formest frunte & dyd merueillous dedes of armes, for alle his hooste was borne up by his handes for he abode al knyghtes. allas he myght not endure the whiche was grete pyte that so worthy a knyght as he was one shold be ouermatched that of late tyme afore hadde ben a knyght of kyng Arthurs & wedded the sister of kyng arthur & for kyng Arthur lay by kyng lots wyf the whiche was arthurs syster & gat on her Mordred, therfor

kyng lot held ayēst Arthur. So ther was a knyght that was called the knyghte with the straunge beeste, and at that tyme his ryght name was called Pellinore, the whiche was a good man of prowesse, and he smote a myghty stroke att kynge Lot as he fought with all his enemyes, and he fayled of his stroke, and smote the hors neck that he fylle to the grounde with kyng lot. And therwith anon Pellinore smote hym a grete stroke thorow the helme & hede vnto the browes & thenne alle the hooste of Orkeney fled for the deth of kynge Lott, and there were slayn many moders sones. But kynge Pellinore bare the wytte of the deth of kynge Lot, wherfore syr Gawayne reuenged the deth of his fader the x yere after he was made knyght and slewe kynge Pellinore with his owne handes. Also there were slayne at that bataille xii kynges on the syde of kyng Lot with Nero, and alle were buryed in the chirche of saynt Steuyns in Camelot, and the remenaunt of knyghtes and of other were buryed in a grete roche.

Capitulum xi.

So at the enterement cam kynge Lots wyf Morgause with her foure sones Gawayne, Agrauayne, Gaherys and Gareth. Also ther came thyder kyng Uryens syr Ewayns fader and Morgan le fay his wyf that was kyng Arthurs syster. Alle these cam to the enterement, but of alle these xii kynges kyng Arthur lete make the tombe of kynge Lot passyng rychely, and made his tombe by his owne, and thenne Arthur lete make xii ymages of laton and couper, & ouer gylt hit with gold in the sygne of xii kynges, & echon of hem helde a tapyr of wax that brent day and nyzt, & kyng Arthur was made in sygne of a fygure standynge aboue hem with a swerd drawen in his hand, & alle the xii fygures had countenaunce lyke vnto men that were ouercome. All this made Merlyn by his subtyl crafte and ther he told the kyng whā I am dede, these tapers shalle brenne no lenger, and soone after the aduentures of the Sangrayll shalle come among yow and be encheued. Also he told Arthur how Balyn the worshipful knyght shal gyue the dolourous stroke, wherof shalle falle grete vengeaunce. O where is Balen & Balan & Pellinore saide

kynge Arthur, as for Pellinore sayd Merlyn, he wyl mete with yow soone. And as for Balyn he wille not be longe from yow, but the other broder wil departe ye shalle see hym no more. By my feyth said Arthur they are two merueyllous knyghtes, and namely Balyn passeth of prowesse of ony knyghte that euer I found, for moche beholden am I vnto hym, wold god he wold abyde with me. Syr sayd Merlyn loke ye kepe wel the scaubard of Excalibur, for ye shalle lese no blood whyle ye haue the scauberd vpon yow though ye haue as many woundes vpon yow as ye may haue. Soo after for grete trust Arthur betoke the scauberd to Morgan le fay his syster, and she loued another knyght better than her husband kynge Uryens or kynge Arthur. And she wold haue had Arthur her broder slayne. And therfor she lete make another scauberd lyke it by enchauntement and gaf the scauberd Excalibur to her loue, and the knyghtes name was called Accolon that after had nere slayne kyng arthur. After this Merlyn told vnto kynge Arthur of the prophecye, that there shold be a grete batail besyde Salysbury, and Mordred his owne sone sholde be ageynste hym. Also he tolde hym that Basdemegus was his cosyn and germayn vnto kynge Uryence.

Capitulum xii.

WYTHIN a daye or two kynge Arthur was somwhat seke, and he lete pytche his pauelione in a medowe, & there he leyd hym doune on a paylet to slepe, but he myght haue no rest. Ryght so he herd a grete noyse of an hors and therwith the kynge loked oute at the porche of the pauelione, and sawe a knyght comynge euen by hym makyng grete dole. Abyde fair syr said Arthur, & telle me wherfor thow makest this sorowe, ye maye lytel amend me said the knyghte and soo passed forthe to the castel of Melyot. Anone after ther cam balen, and whan he sawe kynge Arthur, he alyght of his hors, and cam to the kynge on foote, and salewed hym, by my hede saide Arthur ye be welcome. Sire ryght now cam rydynge this way a knyght makynge grete moorne, for what cause I can not telle, wherfor I wold desyre of yow of your curtosye and of your gentylnesse to

fetche ageyne that knyght, eyther by force or els by his good wil. I wil do more for your lordship than that said balyn, and so he rode more than a paas and found the knyght with a damoysel in a forest & said sir knyzt ye must come with me vnto kynge Arthur for to telle hym of your sorow, that wille I not, sayd the knyghte, for hit wylle scathe me gretely, and do yow none auaylle, syr sayd Balyn I pray yow make yow redy for ye must goo with me, or els I must fyghte with yow and brynge yow by force, and that were me loth to doo. Wylle ye be my waraunt said the knyght and I goo with yow, ye saide Balyn or els I wylle deye therfore. And so he made hym redy to go with Balyn, and lefte the damoysel stylle. And as they were euen afore kynge Arthurs pauelione, there came one inuysybel and smote thys knyghte that wente with Balyn thorow oute the body wyth a spere. Allas sayd the knyght I am slayne vnder youre cōduyt with a knyght called Garlon, therfor take my hors that is better than yours and ryde to the damoysel and folowe the quest that I was in, as she wylle lede yow and reuenge my deth whan ye may. That shalle I doo sayd Balyn, and that I make a vowe vnto knyghthode, and so he departed from thys knyghte with grete sorowe. Soo kyng Arthur lete berye thys knyght rychely, and made a mensyon on his tombe, how there was slayne Herlews le berbeus, and by whome the trechery was done the knyght garlon. But euer the damoysel bare the truncheon of the spere with her that syr Harlews was slayne with al.

Capitulum xiii.

So Balyn and the damoysel rode in to a forest, & ther met with a knyght that had ben on huntynge, and that knyght asked Balyn for what cause he made so grete sorowe, me lyst not to telle yow saide Balyn. Now saide the knyghte and I were armed as ye be I wolde fyghte wyth yow, that shold lytel nede sayd Balyn. I am not aferd to telle yow, and told hym alle the cause how it was. A sayd the knyght is this al. Here I ensure yow by the feithe of my body neuer to departe from yow whyle my lyf lasteth, & soo they

wente to the hostry and armed hem, and so rode forth with balyn. And as they came by an heremytage euen by a Chyrche yerd, ther cam the knyghte garlon inuysybel and smote thys knyghte Peryn de mountebeliarde thurgh the body with a spere. Allas said the knyghte I am slayne by this traytoure knyghte that rydeth Inuysyble. Allas said balyn it is not the fyrst despyte he hath done me, and there the heremyte and Balyn beryed the knyght vnder a ryche stone and a tombe royal. And on the morne they fond letters of gold wryten, how syr Gaweyn shalle reuenge his faders deth kynge Lot, on the kynge Pellinore. Anone after this balyn and the damoysel rode tyl they came to a castel and there balyn alyghte, and he and the damoysel wende to goo in to the castel, and anone as balyn came within the castels yate the portecolys fylle doune at his bak, and there felle many men about the damoysel, and wold haue slayne her. When balyn sawe that, he was sore agreued, for he myghte not helpe the damoysel, and thenne he wente vp in to the toure and lepte ouer the wallys in to the dyche, and hurte hym not, and anone he pulled oute his suerd and wold haue fouzten with hem, and they all sayd nay they wold not fyghte with hym, for they dyd no thyng but thold custome of the castel, and told hym how her lady was seke, & had layne many yeres, and she myghte not be hole but yf she had a dysshe of syluer ful of blood of a clene mayde & a kynges doughter, and therfore the custome of this castel is, there shalle no damoysel passe this way but she shal blede of her blood in a syluer dysshe ful, wel said balyn she shal blede as moche as she may blede, but I wille not lese the lyf of her whyles my lyf lasteth, & soo balyn made her to blede by her good will, but her blood halpe not the lady, and so he & she rested there al nyght, & had there ryght good chere, and on the morn they passed on their wayes. And as it telleth after in the sangraylle that syre Percyualis syster halpe that lady with her blood wherof she was dede.

Capitulum xiiii.

THENNE they rode thre or foure dayes and neuer mette with aduenture, and by happe they were lodged with a gentyll man that

was a ryche man and well at ease. And as they sat at her souper balyn herd ouer complayne greuously by hym in a chayer, what is this noyse said balen, forsothe said his hoost I wylle telle yow. I was but late att a Justynge, and there I Justed with a knyghte that is broder vnto kynge Pellam, and twyes smote I hym doune, & thenne he promysed to quyte me on my best frynde, and so he wounded my sone that can not be hole tyll I haue of that knyghtes blood, and he rydeth alwey Inuysyble, but I knowe not his name. A said Balyn, I knowe that knyght, his name is Garlon, he hath slayne two knyghtes of myn in the same maner, therfor I had lever mete with that knyght than alle the gold in this realme, for the despyte he hath done me, wel said his ooste I shalle telle yow kynge Pellam of lystyneyse hath made do crye in all this countrey a grete feest that shal be within these xx dayes, & no knyght may come ther but yf he brynge his wyf wyth hym, or his peramour, & that knyzte youre enemy and myn ye shalle see that daye. Thenne I behote yow sayd Balyn parte of his blood to hele youre sone with alle. We wille be forward to morne sayd his oost. So on the morne they rode all thre toward Pellam, and they had xv dayes Journey or they cam thyder, and that same day began the greete feeste, and soo they alyght and stabled theyr horses, & went in to the Castel, but balyns oost myght not be lete in by cause he had no lady, thenne Balyn was wel receyued & brought vnto a chamber and vnarmed hym, and there were brought hym robes to his pleasyr, and wold haue had Balen leue his swerd behynde hym. Nay sayd Balen that doo I not for it is the customme of my Countrey a knyghte alweyes to kepe his wepen with hym and that customme wylle I kepe, or els I wyll departe as I cam, thenne they gaf hym leue to were his swerd, and so he wente vnto the castel, and was sette amonge knyghtes of worship and his lady afore hym. Soone balyn asked a knyght, is ther not a knyghte in this court whos name is Garlon, yonder he goth sayd a knyght, he with the blak face, he is the merueyllest knyzt that is now lyuyng for he destroyeth many good knyghtes, for he goth Inuysyble. A wel said Balen is that he, thene balyn auysed hym long yf I slee hym here I shall not scape. And yf I leue hym now perauentur I shalle neuer mete with hym ageyne at suche á steuen, and moche

harme he wille doo and he lyue. Ther with this Garlon aspyed that this Balen behelde hym, and thenne he came and smote Balyn on the face with the bak of his hand, and sayd knyzt why beholdest thow me so for shame therfor ete thy mete and doo that thow cam for. Thow sayst sothe said Balyn, this is not the fyrst despyte that thow hast done me, and therfor I will doo that I cam for and rose vp fyersly and claue his hede to the sholders, gyue me the truncheon sayd Balyn to his lady where with he slewe your knyghte, anone she gaf it hym, for alwey she bare the troncheon with her. And ther with Balyn smote hym thurgh the body, and sayd openly with that truncheon thow hast slayn a good knyghte, and now it stycketh in thy body. And thenne Balyn called vnto hym his hoost, sayenge, now may ye fetche blood ynough to hele your sone with all.

Capitulum xv.

Anone all the knyghtes aroos from the tabyl for to set on Balyn, and kynge Pellam hym self aroos vp fyersly, & sayd knyzt hast thow slayn my broder, thow shalt dye therfor or thou departe, wel said balen do it your self, yes sayde kyng pellā, ther shall no mā haue ado with the, but my self for the loue of my broder. Thenne kyng Pellam cauzt in his hand a grym wepen and smote egrely at balyn, but balyn put the swerd betwixe his hede and the stroke, and therwith his swerd brest in sonder. And whan balyn was wepenles he ranne in to a chamber for to seke somme wepen, and soo fro chamber to chamber, and no wepen he coude fynde, and alweyes kynge Pellam after hym. And at the last he entryd in to a chambyr that was merueillously wel dyzte and rychely, and a bedde arayed with clothe of gold the rychest that myghte be thought, and one lyenge theryn, and therby stode a table of clene gold with four pelours of syluer, that bare up the table, and vpon the table stood a merueillous spere straungely wrought. And whan balyn sawe that spere, he gat it in his hand and torned hym to kyng Pellam, and smote hym passyngly sore with that spere that kynge Pellam felle doune in a swoune, and therwith the castel roofe and wallys brake

and fylle to the erthe, and balyn felle doune so that he myghte not stere foote nor hand. And so the moost party of the castel that was falle doune thorugh that dolorous stroke laye vpon Pellam and balyn thre dayes.

Capitulum xvi.

THENNE Merlyn cam thyder and toke vp Balyn and gat hym a good hors for his was dede, and bad hym ryde oute of that countrey. I wold haue my damoysel sayd balyn. Loo sayd Merlyn where she lyeth dede & kynge Pellam lay so many yeres sore wounded, and myght neuer be hole tyl Galahad the haute prynce heled hym in the quest of the Sangraille, for in that place was part of the blood of our lord Jhesu cryst that Joseph of Armathe broughte in to this lond, and ther hym self lay in that ryche bed. And that was the same spere that Longeus smote oure lorde to the herte, and kynge Pellam was nyghe of Joseph kynne, and that was the moost worshipful-man that lyued in tho dayes, and grete pyte it was of his hurte, for thorow that stroke torned to grete dole tray and tene. Thenne departed Balyn from Merlyn and sayd in this world we mete neuer no more. Soo he rode forth thorowe the fayr countreyes and Cytees & fond the peple dede slayne on euery syde, and alle that were on lyue cryed O balyn thow hast caused grete dommage in these cōtrayes for the dolorous stroke thow gauest vnto kynge Pellā thre contreyes are destroyed, and doubte not but the vengeaunce wil falle on the at the last. Whanne Balyn was past tho contrayes he was passyng fayne, so he rode eyzt dayes or he met with auenture. And at the last he came in to a fayr forest in a valey and was ware of a Toure. And there besyde he sawe a grete hors of werre tayed to a tree, and ther besyde satte a fayr knyght on the ground and made grete mornynge and he was a lykely man and a wel made. Balyn sayd God saue yow why be ye so heuy, telle me and I wylle amende it and I may to my power. Syr knyghte said he ageyne thow doest me grete gryef, for I was in mery thoughtes and now thou puttest me to more payne. Balyn wente a lytel from hym, & loked on his hors,

thenne herd Balyn hym saye thus, a fair lady why haue ye broken my promyse, for thow promysest me to mete me here by none, and I maye curse the that euer ye gaf me this swerd, for with this swerd I slee my self, and pulled it oute, and therwith Balyn sterte vnto hym & took hym by the hand, lete goo my hand sayd the knyght or els I shal slee the, that shal not nede said balyn, for I shal promyse yow my helpe to gete yow your lady, and ye wille telle me where she is, what is your name sayd the knyght, myn name is Balyn le saueage. A syr I knowe yow wel ynough ye are the knyght with the two swerdys and the man of moost prowesse of your handes yuyng, what is your name sayd balen, my name is garnysshe of the mount a poure mans sone. But by my prowesse and hardynesse a duke hath maade me knyght, and gaf me landes, his name is duke Hermel, and his doughter is she that I loue and she me as I demed, hou fer is she hens sayd Balyn, but vi myle said the knyghte. Now ryde we hens sayde these two knyghtes, so they rode more then a paas tyll that they cam to a fayr castel wel wallyd and dyched. I wylle in to the castel sayd Balen, and loke yf she be ther. Soo he wente in and serched fro chamber to chābir, and fond her bedde but she was not there. Thenne Balen loked in to a fayr litil gardyn, and vnder a laurel tre he sawe her lye vpon a quylt of grene samyte and a knyght in her armes fast halsynge eyther other and vnder their hedes grasse & herbes. Whan Balen sawe her lye so with the fowlest knyghte that euer he sawe and she a fair lady, thenne Balyn wente thurgh alle the chambers ageyne and told the knyghte how he fond her as she had slepte fast, and so brought hym in the place there she lay fast slepynge.

Capitulum xvii.

And whan Garnyssh beheld hir so lyeng for pure sorou his mouth and nose brast oute on bledynge and with his swerd he smote of bothe their hedes, and thenne he maade sorowe oute of mesure and sayd O Balyn, Moche sorow hast thow brought vnto me, for haddest thow not shewed me that syght I shold haue passed my

sorow, forsoth said balyn I did it to this entent that it sholde better thy courage, and that ye myght see and knowe her falshede, and to cause yow to leue loue of suche a lady, god knoweth I dyd none other but as I wold ye dyd to me. Allas said garnysshe now is my sorou doubel that I may not endure. Now haue I slayne that I moost loued in al my lyf, and therwith sodenly he roofe hymself on his own swerd vnto the hyltys. When balen sawe that he dressid hym thens ward, lest folke wold say he had slayne them, and so he rode forth, and within thre dayes he cam by a crosse, & theron were letters of gold wrytē that said, it is not for no knyght alone to ryde toward this Castel, thēne saw he an olde hore gentylman comyng toward hym that sayd Balyn le Saueage thow passyst thy bandes to come this waye, therfor torne ageyne and it will auaille the, and he vanysshed awey anone, and soo he herd an horne blowe as it had ben the dethe of a best. That blast said Balyn is blowen for me. For I am the pryse and yet am I not dede, anone with al he sawe an honderd ladyes and many knyghtes that welcommed hym with fayr semblaunt and made hym passyng good chere, vnto his syght and ledde hym in to the castel, and ther was daunsynge and mynstralsye and alle maner of Joye. Thenne the chyef lady of the castel said, knyghte with the two suerdys ye must haue adoo and Juste with a knyght hereby that kepeth an Iland, for ther may no man passe this way but he must Juste or he passe, that is an vnhappy customme said Balyn that a knyght may not passe this wey, but yf he Juste, ye shalle not haue adoo but with one knyghte sayd the lady. Wel sayd Balyn syn I shalle therto I am redy but traueillynge men are ofte wery and their horses to, but though my hors be wery, my hert is not wery. I wold be fayne ther my deth shold be, Syr said a knyght to Balyn, me thynketh your sheld is not good. I wille lene yew a byggar, therof I pray yow, and so he tooke the sheld that was vnknowen and lefte his owne and so rode vnto the Iland, and put hym and his hors in a grete boote, and whan he came on the other syde, he met with a damoysel, and she said, O knyght balyn why haue ye lefte your owne sheld, allas ye haue put your self in grete daunger, for by your sheld ye shold haue ben knowen, it is grete pyte of yow as euer was of knyght, for of thy prowesse & hardynes

thou hast no felawe lyuynge. Me repenteth said balyn that euer I cam within this Countrey, but I maye not torne now ageyne for shame and what auenture shalle falle to me be it lyf or dethe I wille take the aduenture that shalle come to me, & thenne he loked on his armour, & vnderstood he was wel armed, and therwith blessid him and mounted vpon his hors.

Capitulum xviii.

THENNE afore hym he sawe come rydynge oute of a castel a knyght and his hors trapped all reed and hymself in the same colour. Whan this knyghte in the reed beheld Balyn hym thought it shold be his broder Balen by cause of his two swerdys, but by cause he knewe not his sheld he demed it was not he. And so they auentryd theyr speres & came merueillously fast to gyders, and they smote other in the sheldes, but theire speres and theire cours were soo bygge that it bare doune hors & man that they lay bothe in a swoun. But balyn was brysed sore with the falle of his hors, for he was wery of trauaille. And Balan was the fyrst that rose on foote and drewe his swerd and wente toward Balyn, and he aroos and wente ageynst hym. But balan smote balyn fyrste, and he put vp his shelde and smote hym thorow the shelde and tamyd his helme, thenne Balyn smote hym ageyne with that vnhappy swerd and wel nyghe had fellyd his broder Balan, and so they fought ther to gyders tyl theyr brethes faylled, thenne Balyn loked vp to the castel and sawe the Towres stand ful of ladyes. Soo they went vnto bataille ageyne and wounded eueryche other dolefully, and thenne they brethed oftymes, and so wente vnto bataille that alle the place there as they fought was blood reed. And att that tyme ther was none of them bothe but they hadde eyther smyten other seuen grete woundes so that the lest of them myzt haue ben the dethe of the myghtyest gyaunt in this world.

Thenne they wente to batail ageyn so merueillously that doubte it was to here of that bataille for the grete blood shedynge. And their hawberkes vnnailled that naked they were on euery syde. Atte

last balan the yonger broder withdrewe hym a lytel & leid hym doune. Thenne said balyñ le Saueage what knyghte arte thow, for or now I found neuer no knyzt that matched me, my name is said he balan broder vnto the good knyght balyn. Allas sayd balyn that euer I shold see this day, and therwith he felle backward in a swoune. Thenne balan yede on al four feet and handes and put of the helme of his broder and myght not knowe hym by the vysage, it was so ful hewen and bledde, but whan he awoke he sayd O balan my broder thow hast slayne me and I the, wherfore alle the wyde world shalle speke of vs bothe. Allas sayd Balan that euer I sawe this day that thorow myshap I myght not knowe yow, for I aspyed wel your two swerdys, but by cause ye had another shild I demed ye had ben another knyzt. Allas saide Balyn all that maade an vnhappy knyght in the castel, for he caused me to leue myn owne shelde to our bothes destruction, and yf I myzt lyue I wold destroye that castel for ylle customes, that were wel done said Balan, For I had neuer grace to departe fro hem syn that I cam hyther, for here it happed me to slee a knyght that kepte this Iland, & syn myght I neuer departe, and no more shold ye broder & ye myght haue slayne me as ye haue and escaped your self with the lyf. Ryght so cam the lady of the Toure with iiii knyghtes and vi ladyes and vi yomen vnto them and there she herd how they made her mone eyther to other and sayd we came bothe oute of one tombe that is to say one moders bely. And so shalle we lye bothe in one pytte. So Balan prayd the lady of her gentylnesse for his true seruyse, that she wold burye them bothe in that same place there the bataille was done, and she graunted hem with wepynge it shold be done rychely in the best maner. Now wille ye sende for a preest that we may receyue our sacrament and receyue the blessid body of our lord Jhesu cryst, ye said the lady it shalle be done, and so she sente for a preest and gaf hem her ryghtes. Now sayd balen whan we are buryed in one tombe and the mensyon made ouer us, how ii bretheren slewe eche other, there wille neuer good knyght nor good man see our tombe but they wille pray for our soules, & so alle the ladyes and gentylwymen wepte for pyte. Thenne anone Balan dyed, but Balyn dyed not tyl the mydnyghte after, and so were they buryed bothe, and

the lady lete make a mensyon of Balan how he was ther slayne by his broders handes, but she knewe not balyns name.

Capitulum xix.

In the morne cam Merlyn and lete wryte balyns name on the tombe with letters of gold, that here lyeth balyn le Saueage that was the knyzt with the two swerdes and he that smote the dolorous stroke. Also Merlyn lete make there a bedde, that ther shold neuer man lye therin, but he wente oute of his wytte, yet Launcelot de lake fordyd that bed thorow his noblesse, and anone after Balyn was dede, merlyn toke his swerd, and toke of the pomel and set on an other pomel, so merlyn bad a knyght that stode afore hym handeld that swerd, and he assayed, and he myght not handle hit. Thenne Merlyn lough, why laugh ye said the knyghte, this is the cause said Merlyn, ther shalle neuer man handle this suerd but the best knyght of the world, and that shalle be syr Launcelot or els Galahad his sone, and Launcelot with this suerd shalle slee the man that in the world he loued best that shalle be syr Gawayne. Alle this he lete wryte in the pomel of the swerd. Thenne Merlyn lete make a brydge of yron & of stele in to that Iland, and it was but half a foote brode, & there shalle neuer man passe that brydge nor haue hardynes to goo ouer, but yf he were a passyng good man and a good knyght withoute trechery or vylonye. Also the scaubard of Balyns swerd Merlyn lefte it on this syde the Iland that galahad shold fynde it. Also merlyn lete make by his subtylyte that Balyns swerd was put in a marbel stone standyng vp ryght as grete as a mylle stone, and the stone houed alweyes aboue the water and dyd many yeres, and so by aduēture it swam doun the streme to the Cyte of Camelot that is in englysshe Wynchestre, & that same day galahad the haute prynce came with kyng Arthur, and soo galahad broughte wyth hym the scaubard and encheued the swerde, that was there in the marbel stone, houynge vpon the water. And on Whytsonday he encheued the swerd as it is reherced in the book of Sāc-grayll. Soone after this was done Merlyn cae to kyng Arthur and

told hym of the dolorous stroke that Balyn gaf to kyng Pellam, and how Balyn and Balan foughte to gyders the merueillous batail that euer was herd of, and how they were buryed bothe in one Tombe. Allas said kyng Arthur, this is the grettest pyte that euer I herd telle of two knyztes, for in the world I knowe not suche two knyghtes. Thus endeth the tale of Balyn and of Balan two bretheren born in northūberlād good kniztes.

Sequitur iii liber.

Capitulum primum.

N the begynnynge of Arthur after he was chosen kyng by aduēture and by grace for the most party of the barons knewe not that he was Uther pendragons sone, But as Merlyn made it openly knowen. But yet many kynges & lordes helde grete werre ayenst hym for that cause. But wel Arthur ouer came hem alle, for the mooste party the dayes of his lyf he was ruled moche by the counceil of Merlyn. Soo it fell on a tyme kyng Arthur sayd vnto Merlyn, my barons wille lete me haue no rest but nedes I muste take a wyf, and I wylle none take, but by thy counceill and by thyne aduys, it is wel done said Merlyn, that ye take a wyf, for a man of your bounte and noblesse shold not be without a wyf. Now is ther ony that ye loue more than another, ye said kyng Arthur. I loue gweneuer the kynges doughter Lodegrean of the land of Camelerd, the whiche holdeth in his hows the table round that ye told he had of my fader Uther. And this damoysel is the moost valyaunt and fayrest lady that I knowe lyuynge or yet that euer I coude fynde. Syre sayd Merlyn as of her beaute and fayrenes she is one of the fayrest on lyue. But and ye loued her not so wel as ye doo, I shold fynde

yow a damoysel of beaute and of goodenesse that shold lyke yow & plese yow and your herte were not sette. But there as a mans herte is set, he wylle be lothe to retorne, that is trouth said kyng Arthur, but Merlyn warned the kynge couertly that gweneuer was not holsome for hym to take to wyf, for he warned hym that launcelot shold loue her and she hym ageyne, and so he torned his tale to the auentures of Sancgreal. Thenne merlyn desyred of the kynge for to haue men with hym that shold enquere of gweneuer, and so the kyng graunted hym, & Merlyn wente forth vnto kyng Lodegrean of Camyllerd, & told hym of the desyre of the kyng that he wold haue vnto his wyf Gweneuer his doughter, that is to me sayd kyng Lodegreans the best tydynges that euer I herd, that so worthy a kyng of prowesse and noblesse wille wedde my doughter. And as for my landes I wylle gyue hym wyst I it myght please hym, but he hath londes ynowe, hym nedeth none, but I shalle sende hym a gyfte shalle please hym moche more, for I shalle gyue hym the table round, the whiche Utherpendragon gaue me, & whan it is ful complete, ther is an C knyghtes & fyfty. And as for an C good knyghtes I haue myself, but I fawte .l., for so many haue ben slayne in my dayes, and so Lodegreans delyuerd his doughter Gweneuer vnto Merlyn, and the table round with the C knyghtes, and so they rode fresshly with grete royalte, what by water and what by land, tyl that they came nyghe vnto london.

Capitulum Secundum.

WHANNE kyng Arthur herd of the comyng of gweneuer and the C knyghtes with the table round, thenne kynge Arthur maade grete Joye for her comyng, and that ryche presente, and said openly this fair lady is passyng welcome vnto me, for I haue loued her longe. And therfore ther is nothyng so lyef to me. And these knyghtes with the round table pleasen me more than ryght grete rychesse. And in alle hast the kynge lete ordeyne for the maryage and the Coronacyon in the moost honorable wyse that coude be deuysed. Now Merlyn said kyng Arthur, goo thow and aspye me in al this

land l knyghtes whiche ben of most prowesse & worship. Within short tyme merlyn had founde suche knyztes that shold fulfylle xx and viii knyghtes but no mo he coude fynde. Thenne the Bisshop of Caunterbury was fette and he blessid the syeges with grete Royalte and deuocyon, and there sette the viii and xx knyghtes in her syeges, and whan this was done, Merlyn said fayr syrs ye must al aryse and come to kyng Arthur for to doo hym homage, he will haue the better wil to mayntene yow, and so they arose and dyd their homage, & when they were gone, merlyn fond in euery syeges letters of gold that told the knyghtes names that had sytten therin. But two syeges were voyde. And so anone cam yong gawayn & asked the kyng a yefte. Aske said the kyng, & I shal graunte it yow, syr I aske that ye will make me knyzt, that same day ye shall wedde faire Gueneuer. I will do it with a good wil said kyng arthur & do vnto yow all the worship that I may, for I must by reson ye ar myn neuew my systers sone.

Ca. iii.

Forth with alle ther cam a poure man in to the Courte and broughte with hym a fayre yonge man of xviii yere of age rydynge vpon a lene mare, and the poure man asked all men that he met, where shall I fynde kyng arthur, yonder he is sayd the knyghtes, wylt thow ony thynge with hym, ye sayd the poure man, therfor I cam hyder, anone as he came before the kyng he salewed hym and sayd O kyng Arthur the floure of all knyghtes and kynges I byseche Jhesu saue the. Syr it was told me that at this tyme of your maryage ye wolde yeue any man the yefte that he wold aske, oute excepte that were vnresonable, that is trouth said the kynge suche cryes I lete make, and that will I holde so it apayre not my realme nor myne estate, ye say wel and graciously said the poure man. Syre I aske no thyng els but that ye wil make my sone here a knyghte, it is a grete thynge thow askest of me said the kyng, what is thy name said the kyng to the poure man, syr my name is Aryes the Cowherd. Whether cometh this of the or of thy sone said the kyng.

Nay syre said Aryes, this desyre cometh of my sone and not of me. For I shal telle yow I haue xiii sones, & alle they will falle to what laboure I put them & wille be ryght glad to doo labour, but this child wylle not laboure for me for ony thyng that my wyf or I may doo, but alweyes he wille be shotynge or castynge dartes, and glad for to see batailles and to behold knyghtes. And alweyes day and nyghte he desyreth of me to be made a knyzt. What is thy name sayd the kynge vnto the yonge man. Syre my name is Tor, the kyng beheld hym fast, and sawe he was passyngly wel vysaged and passyngly wel made of his yeres. Wel said kyng Arthur vnto Aryes the Cowherd fetche al thy sones afore me that I may see them, and so the poure man did, and al were shapen moche lyke the poure man. But Tor was not lyke none of hem al in shap ne in contenaunce, for he was moche more than ony of hem. Now said kyng Arthur vnto the Cowherd, where is the swerd he shalle be maade knyght withal, it is here sayd Tor, take it oute of the shethe sayd the kynge, and requyre me to make yow a knyght. Thenne Tor alyght of his mare and pulled oute his swerd knelynge and requyrynge the kynge, that he wold maake hym knyght, & that he myghte be a knyght of the table round. As for a knyzt I will make yow, & therwith smote hym in the neck with the swerd sayēg be ye a good knyzt, & so I pray to god so ye may be, & yf ye be of prowesse and of worthynesse ye shalle be a knyght of the table round. Now Merlyn sayd Arthur say whether this Tor shall be a good knyghte, or no, ye syre he ought to be a good knyght, for he is comen of as good a man as ony is on lyue, and of kynges blood, how so syr sayd the kynge. I shalle telle yow sayd Merlyn. This poure man Aryes the cowherd is not his fader, he is no thyng syb to hym, for kynge Pellinore is his fader. I suppose nay said the Cowherd, fetche thy wyf afore me said merlyn, and she shalle not say nay. Anon the wyf was fet which was a fair houswyf, and there she ansuerd Merlyn ful womanly, and there she told the kynge and Merlyn that whan she was a maide & went to mylke kyen, ther met with her a sterne knyght, & half by force he had my maidenhede, & at that tyme he bigat my sone Tor, & he toke awey from me my greyhound that I had that tyme with me, & saide that he wold kepe the greyhound for my loue. A said

the Cowherd I wende not thys, but I may bileue it wel, for he had neuer no tatches of me, sir said Tor vnto Merlyn dishonoure not my moder, syr said merlyn it is more for your worship than hurte, for your fader is a good man & a kyng, & he may ryght wel auaunce you and your moder, for ye were begoten or euer she was wedded, that is trouth said the wyf, hit is the lasse gryef vnto me sayd the Cowherd.

Capitulum Quartum.

So on the morne kyng Pellinore cam to the Court of kynge Arthur, whiche had grete ioye of hym and told hym of Tor, how he was his sone, and how he hadde made hym knyght at the request of the Cowherd. Whan Pellinore beheld Tor, he pleasyd hym moche, so the kyng made gawayne knyght, but Tor was the fyrst he made at the feest.

What is the cause said kyng Arthur that there ben two places voyde in the syeges. Syre said Merlyn, ther shalle no man syt in tho places, but they that shall be of moost worship. But in the sege perillous there shall no man sytte therin but one, and yf ther be ony so hardy to doo it he shall be destroyed, & he that shalle sytte there shalle haue no felawe. And therwith Merlyn tooke kynge Pellinore by the hand, and in the one hand next the two seges and the sege peryllous he said in open audyence this is your place and best ye are worthy to sytte therein of ony that is here, there at sat syr gauayne in grete enuy & told Gaherys his broder, yonder knyghte is put to grete worship, the whiche greueth me sore, for he slewe our fader kynge Lot, therfor I wille slee hym said Gauayne with a swerd, that was sente me that is passyng trenchaunt, ye shall not soo said Gaherys at this tyme, For at this tyme I am but a squyer, and whan I am made knyght, I wol be auengyd on hym and therfor broder it is best ye suffre tyl another tyme that we may haue hym oute of the Courte, for & we dyd so, we shold trouble this hyhe feest. I wyl wel said gauayn as ye wylle.

Capitulum quintum.

THENNE was the hyghe feeste made redy, and the kynge was wedded att Camelott vnto Dame Gweneuer in the chirche of saynt steuyns with grete solempnyte. And as euery man was set after his degree, Merlyn wente to alle the knyghtes of the round table, and bad hem sytte styll that none of hem remeue, for ye shalle see a straunge and a merueillous aduenture. Ryght so as they sat ther came rennyng in a whyte hert in to the halle and a whyte brachet next hym and xxx couple of black rennyng houndes cam after with a greete crye, and the hert went aboute the table round as he went by other boordes, the whyte brachet boot hym by the buttok & pulled oute a pees, where thurgh the herte lepte a grete lepe, and ouerthrewe a knyght that sat at the boord syde, and therwith the knyzt aroos & toke vp the brachet, & so went forth oute of the halle & toke his hors and rode his wey with the brachet, right so anone cam in a lady on a whyte palfrey & cryed aloude to kyng Arthur. Syre suffre me not to haue this despyte for the brachet was myn that the knyght lad aweye. I maye not doo therwith said the kynge. With this there came a knyght rydynge al armed on a grete hors, and tooke the lady awey with hym with force, and euer she cryed and made grete dole. Whanne she was gone the kynge was glad for she made suche a noyse. Nay said merlyn, ye may not leue this aduētures so lyghtely. For these adventures must be brought agayne or els it wold be disworship to yow and to your feest. I wyll said the kynge that al be done by your aduys. Thenne saide merlyn lete calle syr gauayne, for he must brynge ageyne the whyte herte. Also syr ye must lete calle Syre Tor, for he must brynge ageyne the brachet, and the knyght or els slee hym. Also lete calle kynge Pellinore for he must brynge ageyne the lady and the knyght or els slee hym, and these thre knyghtes shalle doo merueillous auētures or they come ageyn. Thenne were they called al thre as it reherceth afore, and eueryche of hem toke his charge, and armed them surely. But sir gauayne had the fyrst request, and therfore we wille begynne at hym.

Capitulum vi.

Syre gauayne roode more than a paas and gaheryse his broder that roode with hym in stede of a squyer to doo hym seruyse. Soo as they rode they sawe two knyztes fyghte on horsbak passyng sore, so syr gauayn & his broder rode betwixe them, and asked them for what cause they foughte so, the one knyght ansuerd and sayd, we fyghte for a symple mater, for we two be two bretheren born & begoten of one man & of one woman. allas said sir gauayn why do ye so, syr said the elder, ther cam a whyte hert this way this day & many hoūdes chaced hym, & a whyte brachet was alwey next hym, and we vnderstood it was auenture made for the hyhe feest of kynge Arthur, and therfore I wold haue gone after to haue wonne me worship, and here my yonger broder said he wolde go after the herte, for he was better knyght than I. And for this cause we felle at debate, & so we thouzt to preue whiche of vs bothe was better knyzt. This is a symple cause said syr gauayn, vncouth mē ye shold debate with al & no broder with broder, therfor but yf ye wil do by my coūceil I wil haue ado with yow, that is ye shal yelde you vnto me, & that ye go vnto kyng Arthur and yelde yow vnto his grace, sir knyzt said the ii bretheren we are forfoughten & moche blood haue we loste thorow our wilfulnesse. And therfore we wolde be loth to haue adoo with yow, thenne do as I will haue yow said sir gauayne, we wille agree to fulfylle your wylle. But by whom shalle we saye that we be thyder sente, ye maye say, by the knyzt that foloweth the quest of the herte that was whyte. Now what is your name sayd gauayne. Sorlouse of the forest said the eldar & my name is sayde the yonger Bryan of the forest and soo they departed and wente to the kynges Court, and Syr gauayne on his quest, and as gauayne folowed the herte by the crye of the houndes euen afore hym ther was a grete Ryuer, and the hert swamme ouer, and as syr gauayne wold folowe after, ther stode a knyght ouer the other syde and sayd, Syre knyghte come not ouer after this herte, but yf thou wilt Juste with me, I wille not faille, as for that said sir gauayn to folowe the quest that I am in, and soo maade his hors to swymme ouer the

water, and anone they gat theire speres, and ranne to gyder ful hard, but syre gauayne smote hym of his hors, and thenne he torned his hors & bad hym yelde hym. Nay sayd the knyght not so though thow haue the better of me on horsbak. I pray the valyaunt knyght alyghte a foote and matche we to gyders with swerdes. What is youre name said syr gauayne. Alardyn of the Ilys said the other, thenne eyther dressid her sheldes and smote to gyders, but sir gauayne smote hym so hard thorow the helme that it went to the braynes and the knyght felle doune dede. A said Gaheryse that was a myghty stroke of a yonge knyght.

Capitulum Septimum.

THENE Gauayne and Gaheryse rode more than a paas after the whyte herte, and lete slyppe at the herte thre couple of greyhoundes, and so they chace the herte in to a castel, and in the chyef place of the castel they slewe the hert, syr gauayne and gaheryse folowed after. Ryght soo there came a knyght oute of a chamber with a swerd drawe in his hand and slewe two of the greyhoundes euen in the syghte of syre gauayne, and the remenaunte he chaced hem with his swerd oute of the castel. And whan he cam ageyne he sayd, O my whyte herte, me repenteth that thow art dede, for my souerayne lady gaf the to me, and euyll have I kepte the, and thy deth shalle be dere bought and I lyue, and anone he wente in to his chamber and armed hym, and came oute fyersly, & there mette he with syr gauayne, why haue ye slayne my houndes said syr gauayn, for they dyd but their kynde, and leuer I had ye had wroken your angre vpon me than vpon a dom best, thow saist trouth said the knyght I haue auengyd me on thy houndes and so I wille on the or thow goo. Thenne syr Gauayne alyght a foote and dressid his shelde and stroke to gyders myghtely, and clafe their sheldes and stoned their helmes and brak their hawberkes that the blood ranne doune to their feet. Atte last syr gauayne smote the knyght so hard that he felle to the erthe, and thenne he cryed mercy, and yelded hym, and besought hym as he was a knyghte and gentylman, to saue his lyf, thow shalt dye said

sir gauayne for sleyng of my houndes. I wille make amendys said the knyght vnto my power. Syr gauayne wold no mercy haue but vnlacyd his helme to haue stryken of his hede. Ryght soo came his lady oute of a chamber and felle ouer hym, and soo he smote of her hede by mysauenture. Allas saide Gaheryse that is fowle and shamefully done, that shame shal neuer from yow. Also ye shold gyue mercy vnto them that aske mercy, for a knyzt without mercy is withoute worship. Syr gauayne was so stonyed of the deth of this fair lady, that he wiste not what he dyd, and said vnto the knyght aryse I wille gyue the mercy, nay nay said the knyght, I take no force of mercy now, for thou hast slayne my loue and my lady that I loued best of alle erthely thynge. Me sore repenteth it said syr gauayn, for I thoughte to stryke vnto the. But now thow shalt goo vnto kyng Arthur and telle hym of thyne aduentures and how thow arte ouercome by the knyghte that wente in the queste of the whyte herte. I take no force said the knyzt whether I lyue or I dye but so for drede of deth he swore to goo vnto kynge Arthur, & he made hym to bere one greyhound before hym on his hors and another behynde hym. What is your name said sir gauayn or we departe, my name is said the knyght Ablamor of the marise, soo he departed toward Camelot.

Capitulum octauum.

And syr gauayne went in to the castel and made hym redy to lye there al nyght, and wold haue vnarmed hym, what wylle ye doo sayd gaheryse, wylle ye vnarme yow in this Countrey, ye may thynke ye haue many enemyes here, they had not sooner sayd that word but ther cā four knyghtes wel armed and assaylled syr gauayne hard and said vnto hym thou newe made knyght thow hast shamed thy knyghthode, for a knyght withoute mercy is dishonoured. Also thow hast slayne a fayr lady to thy grete shame to the worldes ende, and doubte thow not thow shalt haue grete nede of mercy or thow departe from vs. And therwith one of hem smote syr gauayne a grete stroke that nygh he felle to the erthe, and gaheryse smote hym

ageyne sore, and soo they were on the one syde and on the other, that syr gauayne and gaheryse were in ieopardy of their lyues, and one with a bowe an archer smote syr gauayne thurz the arme that it greued hym wonderly sore. And as they shold haue ben slayne, ther cam four fair ladyes, and besought the knyghtes of grace for syre gauayne, and goodely atte request of the ladyes they gaf syr gauayne, and gaheryse their lyues, & made hem to yelde them as prysoners, thenne gauayne and gaheryse made grete dole. Allas sayd syre gauayne myn arme greueth me sore. I am lyke to be maymed and so made his complaynt pytously, erly on the morow ther cam to syr gauayne one of the four ladyes, that had herd alle his complaynte and said syr knyzte what chere, not good said he it is your owne defaulte sayd the lady, for ye haue doone a passynge fowle dede in the sleynge of the lady, the whiche will be grete vylany vnto yow. But be ye not of kynge Arthurs kyn saide the lady, yes truly sayd syr gauayne, what is your name saide the lady, ye must telle it me or ye passe, my name is gauayne the kyng Lott of Orkeney sone, and my moder is kynge Arthurs syster. A thenne are ye neuewe vnto kyng Arthur sayd the lady, and I shalle so speke for yow that ye shall haue conduyte to go to kynge Arthur for his loue, and soo she departed, and told the foure knyghtes how theire prysoner was kynge Arthurs neuewe, and his name is syr gauayne kyng Lots sone of Orkeney, and they gaf hym the hertes hede by cause it was in his quest. Thenne anone they delyuerd syr Gauayne vnder this promyse that he shold bere the dede lady with hym in this maner. The hede of her was hanged aboute his neck and the hole body of hyr lay before hym on his hors mane. Ryght soo rode he forth vnto Camelot. And anone as he was come merlyn desyred of kyng Arthur y^{t} Syre Gauayne shold be sworne to telle of alle his auentures, and how he slewe the lady, and how he wold gyue no mercy vnto the knyght, where thurgh the lady was slayne. Thenne the kynge and the quene were gretely displeasyd with syr gauayn for the sleynge of the lady. And ther by ordenaunce of the quene ther was set a quest of ladyes on syr gauayn, and they juged hym for euer whyle he lyued to be with all ladyes & to fyzte for her quarels, & that euer he shold be curteys, & neuer to refuse mercy to hym,

that asketh mercy. Thus was gauayne sworne vpon the four euuangelystes that he shold neuer be ageynst lady ne gentilwoman, but yf he fought for a lady, and his aduersary fouzt for another. And thus endeth the auenture of syr gauayn that he dyd at the maryage of kyng Arthur. Amen.

Capitulum ix.

THAN Syre Tor was redy he mounted vpon his hors bak, and rode after the knyght with the brachet, so as he rode he mette with a dwarf sodenly, that smote hys hors on the hede with a staf, that he wente backward his spere lengthe. Why dost thou so said syre Tor, for thou shalt not passe this way, but yf thow Juste with yonder knyghtes of the pauelions. Thenne was Tor ware where two pauelions were, & grete sperys stood oute, and two sheldes henge on trees by the pauelions. I may not tary said syr Tor, for I am in a quest that I must nedes folowe, thou shalt not passe said the dwarf, and therwith alle he blewe his horne, thenne ther cam one armed on horsbak, and dressyd his shelde, and cam fast toward Tor, and he dressid hym ageynst hym, and so ranne to gyders that Tor bare hym from his hors, and anone the knyght yeld hym to his mercy. But syr I haue a felawe in yonder pauelione that wille haue adoo with yow anone, he shall be welcome said syr Tor. Thenne was he ware of another knyght comyng with grete raundon, and eche of them dressid to other, that merueille it was to see, but the knyght smote syre Tor a grete stroke in myddes of the shelde that his spere all to sheuered. And syr Tor smote hym thurgh the sheld by lowe of the sheld that it wente thorow the coost of the knyzt, but the stroke slewe hym not. And therwith syr Tor alyght & smote hym on the helme a grete stroke, and therwith the knyght yelded hym and besought hym of mercy. I wille wel said syr Tor. But thou and thy felawe must goo vnto kynge Arthur, and yelde yow prysoners vn to hym, by whome shall we say are we thyder sente, ye shall say by the knyght that wente in the quest of the knyght that wente with the brachet. Now what be your ii names said syr Tor, my name is sayd

the one Sire Felot of Langduk, & my name is said the other Sir Petypase of Wynchylse. Now go ye forth saide syre Tor and god spede yow & me. Thenne cam the dwarf and saide vnto syr Tor, I praye yow gyue me a yefte. I wylle wel said syr Tor, aske, I aske no more saide the dwarf, but that ye wille suffre me to doo yow seruyse, for I will serue no more recreaunt knyghtes. Take an hors said syr Tor and ryde on with me. I wote ye ryde after the knyght with the whyte brachet, and I shalle brynge yow there he is sayd the dwerf. And soo they rode thorow oute a forest, and at the last they were ware of two pauelions euen by a pryory with two sheldes. And the one shylde was enewed with whyte, and the other shelde was reed.

Capitulum x.

Therwith syr Tor alyghte and toke the dwarf his glayue, and soo he cam to the whyte pauelione, and sawe thre damoysels lye in it, and one paylet slepyng, & so he wente to the other pauelione, and found a lady lyeng slepyng therin. But ther was the whyte brachet that bayed at her fast, and therwith the lady yede oute of the pauelione & all her damoysels. But anone as syr Tor aspyed the whyte brachet, he took her by force and took her to the dwerf, what, wille ye so sayd the lady take my brachet from me, ye sayd syr Tor, this brachet haue I sought from kynge Arthurs Courte hyder, well said the lady, knyght ye shalle not go fer with her, but that ye shalle be mette and greued. I shall abyde what auenture that cometh by the grace of god, and so mounted vpon his hors, and passed on his way towarde Camelot, but it was so nere nyght he myzt not passe but lytel ferther, knowe ye ony lodgyng said Tor, I knowe none said the dwarf, but here besydes is an hermytage, and there ye muste take lodgynge as ye fynde. And within a whyle they cam to the heremytage & took lodgyng, and was there gras otys and breed for their horses soone it was sped, and full hard was their souper but there they rested hem al nyght tyl on the morne, and herd a masse deuoutely, and tooke their leue of the heremyte, and syre Tor prayed the heremyte to pray for hym, he sayd he wold and betooke hym to

god. And soo mounted vpon horsbak and rode towardes Camelot a longe whyle, with that they herd a knyzte calle lowde that came after hem, and he sayd knyghte abyde, & yelde my brachet that thow took from my lady. Syr Tor retorned ageyne, and behelde hym how he was a semely knyghte and wel horsed and wel armed at al poyntes, thenne Syre Tor dressyd his shelde and took his spere in his handes and the other cam fyersly vpon hym, and smote bothe hors & man to the erthe, anone they aroos lyghtely and drewe her swerdes as egrely as lyons and put their sheldes afore them and smote thorow the sheldes that the cantels felle of bothe partyes. Also they tamyd their helmes that the hote blood ranne oute, and the thyck maylles of their hawberkes they carfe and rofe in sonder that the hote blood ranne to the erthe, and both they had many woundes and were passyng wery. But syr Tor aspyed that the other knyght faynted, and thenne he sewed fast vpon hym and doubled his strokes and garte hym go to the erthe on the one syde, thenne Syre Tor bad hym yelde hym, that wille I not said Abilleus whyle my lyf lasteth and the soule is within my body onles that thou wilt yeue me the brachet, that wylle I not doo sayd syre Tor, for it was my quest to brynge ageyne thy brachet, the or bothe.

Capitulum xi.

Wyth that cam a damoysel rydynge on a palfrey as fast as she myzt dryue and cryed with a lowde voys vnto Syre Tor, what wille ye with me sayd syr Tor. I byseche the said the damoysel for kynge Arthurs loue, gyue me a yefte. I requyre the gentyl knyght as thow arte a gentilman. Now said Tor, Aske a yefte and I wille gyue it yow, gramercy said the damoysel. Now I aske the hede of the fals knyght Abelleus, for he is the mooste outragyous knyght that lyueth & the grettest murtherer. I am loth seid syr Tor of that gyfte I haue gyuen yow, lete hym make amendys in that he hath trespaced vnto yow, now said the damoysel he may not, for he slewe myn owne broder afore myn owne eyen that was a better knyght than he, and he hadde had grace, and I kneled half an houre

afore hym in the myre for to saue my broders lyf that had done hym no dammage but fought with hym by auenture of armes, and so for al that I coude do, he stroke of his hede, wherfore I requyre the as thow arte a true knyght to gyue me my yefte or els I shal shame the in al the Court of kyng Arthur, for he is the falsest knyght lyuynge and a grete destroyer of good knyghtes. Thenne whan Abelleus herd this, he was more aferd, and yelded hym and asked mercy. I maye not now saide syr Tor, but yf I shold be founde fals of my promesse, for whyle I wold haue taken you to mercy, ye wold none aske but yf ye had the brachet ageyn that was my quest. And ther with he tooke of his helme, and he aroos and fled, and syr Tor after hym and smote of his hede quyte. Now syr said the damoysel, it is nere nyght. I pray yow come & lodge with me here at my place, it is here fast by. I will wel said sir Tor, for his hors and he had ferd euyll syn they departed from Camelot, and soo he rode with her and had passyng good chere with her, and she hadde a passyng fair old knyght to her husband that made hym passynge good chere and wel easyd bothe his hors and he, and on the morne he herd his masse and brake his fast and tooke his leue of the knyghte and of the lady that besought hym to telle hem his name. Truly he said my name is syr Tor that was late made knyght, and this was the fyrst queste of armes that euer I dyd to bringe ageyn that this knyght Abelleus toke awey fro kyng arthurs courte. O fayr knyght said the lady and her husband, and ye come here in oure marches, come and see oure poure lodgynge, and it shalle be alweyes at your commaundement. Soo syre Tor departed and came to Camelot on the thyrdde day by noone, and the kyng & the quene & alle the Courte was passyng fayne of his comyng and made grete ioye that he was come ageyne, for he wente from the Court with lytel socour, but as kyng Pellinore his fader gaf hym an old courser, and kyng Arthur gaf hym armour and a swerd, and els had he none other socour, but rode so forthe hym self alone. And thenne the kyng and the quene by merlyns aduys made hym to swere to telle of his auentures, and soo he told and made pryeues of his dedes as it is afore reherced, wherfor the kyng and the quene made grete ioye, nay nay saide Merlyn these ben but Japes to that he shalle doo, for he shalle preue a noble

knyght of prowesse as good as ony is lyuyng and gentyl and curteis & of good tatches and passyng true of his promesse, and neuer shalle outrage, where thorow Merlyns wordes kynge Arthur gaf hym an erldome of londes that felle vnto hym, and here endeth the quest of Syr Tor kynge Pellenors sone.

Capitulum xii.

THENNE kynge Pellinore armed hym and mounted vpon his hors and rode more than a paas after the lady that the knyzt ladde awey. And as he rode in a forest, he sawe in a valey a damoysel sitte by a welle and a wounded knyght in her armes, and Pellenore salewed her. And whan she was ware of hym she cryed ouer lowde, helpe me knyghte for crystes sake kynge Pellinore & he wold not tarye he was so eger in his quest, and euer she cryed an C tymes after help. Whanne she sawe he wold not abyde, she prayd vnto god to sende hym as moche nede of help as she had, and that he myzt fele it or he dyed. Soo as the book telleth the knyght there dyed that there was wounded, wherfor the lady for pure sorowe slewe her self with his swerd. As kynge Pellinore rode in that valey he met with a poure man a labourer. Sawest thow not saide Pellinore a knyghte rydynge and ledynge aweye a lady, ye said the man. I sawe that knyght and the lady that made grete dole. And yonder bynethe in a valey ther shal ye see two pauelions and one of the knyztes of the pauelions chalengyd that lady of that knyght and sayd she was his cosyn nere, wherfor he shold lede her no ferther. And soo they waged bataill in that quarel, the one saide he wold haue her by force, and the other said he wold haue the rule of her by cause he was her kynnesman and wold lede her to her kyn, for this quarel he lefte them fyghtynge. And yf ye wille ryde a paas ye shalle fynde them fyghtyng, and the lady was beleft with the two squyers in the pauelions, god thanke the sayd kynge Pellenore. Thenne he rode a wallop tyll he had a syght of the two pauelions and the two knyghtes fyghtyng, anon he rode vnto the pauelions, and sawe the lady that was his quest, and sayd fayre lady ye must goo with me vnto the

court of kynge Arthur. Syr knyght said the two squyers that were with her yonder are two knyghtes that fyghte for thys lady, goo thyder and departe them, and be agreed with hem, & thenne may ye haue her at your pleasyr, ye say wel sayd kyng Pellenore. And anone he rode betwixt them and departed hem and asked hem the causes why that they fought. Sir knyght said the one, I shalle telle yow, this lady is my kynneswoman nygh myn auntes doughter. And whan I herd her complayne that she was with hym maulgre her hede, I waged bataille to fyghte with hym. Syre knyght sayd the other whoos name was Hontzlake of Wentland, and this lady I gat by my prowesse of armes this day at Arthurs courte, that is vntruly said, said kynge Pellenore, for ye cam in sodenly ther as we were at the hyghe feest and tooke awey this lady or ony man myght make hym redy and therfore hit was my quest to brynge her ageyne and yow bothe, or els the one of vs to abyde in the felde, therfor the lady shalle goo with me, or I wille dye for it, for I haue promysed hit kynge Arthur. And therfor fyghte ye no more, for none of yow shalle haue no parte of her at this tyme. And yf ye lyst to fyzte for her, fyzte with me, and I wille defende her, wel said the knyghtes make you redy, and we shalle assaille yow with al our power. And as kynge Pellenore wold haue put his hors fro them syr Hontzlake roofe his hors thorow with a swerd and said, Now art thow on foote as wel as we are. Whan kynge Pellinore aspyed that his hors was slayne, lyztely he lepte from his hors, and pulled oute his swerd, and put his sheld afore hym, and sayde knyghte kepe wel thy heede, for thow shalt haue a buffet for the sleyng of my hors. So kyng Pellenore gaf hym suche a stroke vpon the helme that he clafe the hede doune to the chynne that he fylle to the erthe dede.

Capitulum xiii.

And thenne he torned hym to the other knyzte that was sore wounded, but whan he sawe the others buffet, he wold not fyghte, but kneled doune and sayd take my cosyn the lady with yow at youre request, and I requyre yow as ye be a true knyghte, put her

to no shame nor vylony. What sayd kynge Pellenore wylle ye not fyghte for her, no syr sayd the knyghte I wylle not fyghte with suche a knyzte of prowesse as ye be, wel said Pellenore, ye say wel, I promyse yow she shall haue no vylony by me as I am true knyght, but now me lacketh an hors said Pellinore, but I wylle haue hontz-lakes hors, ye shalle not nede sayd the knyght, for I shalle gyue yow suche an hors as shalle please yow, so that ye wille lodge with me, for it is nere nyghte. I wille wel sayd kynge Pellenore abyde with yow al nyghte, and there he hadde with hym ryght good chere, and faryd of the best with passynge good wyne and had mery rest that nyghte. And on the morne he herd a masse and dyned. And thenne was broughte hym a fayre bay courser, and kynge Pellenors sadel sette vpon hym. Now what shalle I calle yow said the knyzt in as moche as ye haue my cosyn at your desyre of your quest. Syr I shalle telle yow my name is kyng Pellenore of the Ilys and knyghte of the table round. Now I am glad said the knyght that suche a noble man shalle haue the rule of my cosyn. Now what is your name said Pellenore, I pray yow telle me. Syr my name is syr Meliot of Logurs, and this lady my cosyn hyght Nymue, and the knyghte that was in the other pauelione is my sworne broder a passynge good knyzte and his name is Bryan of the Ilys, and he is ful loth to do wronge, and ful lothe to fyghte with ony man, but yf he be sore souzt on, so that for shame he may not leue it. It is merueil said Pellinore that he wille not haue adoo with me, syr he wil not haue adoo with no man but yf it be at his request. Brynge hym to the Courte said Pellenore one of these dayes. Syr we wylle come to gyders, and ye shalle be welcome said Pellinore to the Courte of kynge Arthur, and gretely allowed for your comynge, and so he departed with the lady, & brouzt her to Camelot. Soo as they rode in a valey it was ful of stones, and there the ladyes hors stumbled and threwe her doun that her arme was sore brysed and nere she swouned for payne. Allas syr sayd the lady myn arme is out of lythe wher thorow I must nedes reste me, ye shall wel said kyng Pellinore, and so he alyzt vnder a fayr tree where was fayr grasse and he put his hors therto, and so leyd hym vnder the tree, and slepte tyl it was nyghe nyght. And whan he awoke, he wold haue ryden. Sir said the lady it is so derke that

ye may as wel ryde backward as forward, soo they abode styll & made there their lodgyng. Thenne syr Pellenore put of his armour, thēne a lytel afore mydnyzt they herd the trottynge of an hors, be ye styll said kyng Pellenore, for we shalle here of somme auenture.

Capitulum xiiii.

And ther with he armed hym, so ryght euen afore hym ther met two knyghtes, the one cam froward Camelot, and the other from the northe, and eyther salewed other, what tydynges at Camelot sayd the one, by my hede saide the other ther haue I ben & aspyed the courte of kynge Arthur, And ther is suche a felaushyp they may neuer be broken, and wel nyghe al the world holdeth with Arthur, for ther is the flour of chyualrye. Now for this cause I am rydyng in to the north to telle our chyuetayns of the felaushyp that is withholden with kyng Arthur, as for that said the other knyght I haue brought a remedy with me that is the grettest poyson that euer ye herd speke of & to Camelot wyll I with it, for we haue a frend ryght nyghe kyng Arthur and wel cherysshed that shal poysone kynge Arthur, for so he hath promysed oure chyuetayns & receyued grete yeftes for to do it. Beware said the other knyght of Merlyn, for he knoweth alle thynges by the deuyls crafte, therfore wille I not lete it said the knyghte, & so they departed in sonder. Anone after Pellinore maade hym redy and his lady and rode toward Camelot. And as they cam by the wel there as the wounded knyght was and the lady, there he fond the knyghte and the lady eten with lyons or wylde beestes al sauf the hede, wherfor he made grete sorowe and wepte passynge sore and said Allas her lyf myghte I haue saued, but I was so fyers in my quest therfore I wold not abyde. Wherfore make ye suche doole said the lady. I wote not said Pellinore, but my herte morneth sore of the deth of her for she was a passyng fayr lady and a yonge. Now wylle ye doo by myne aduys said the lady, take this knyghte and lete hym be buryed in an heremytage, and thenne take the ladyes hede and bere it with yow vnto Arthur. Soo kyng Pellinore took this dede knyght on his sholders, and broughte hym to the heremytage

and charged the heremyte with the corps, that seruyse shold be done for the soule, and take his harneys for your payne, it shalle be done said the heremyte as I wille ansuer vnto god.

Capitulum xv.

And ther with they departed and cam there as the hede of the lady lay with a fair yelow here that greued kyng Pellinore passyngly sore whan he loked on hit, for moche he cast his herte on the vysage. And soo by none they came to Camelot, and the kynge and the quene were passyng fayn of his comynge to the Courte. And there he was made to swere vpon the four euuangelystes to telle the trouth of his quest from the one to the other. A syr Pellinore sayd quene Gweneuer ye were gretely to blame that ye saued not this ladyes lyf. Madame said Pellinore ye were gretely to blame and ye wold not saue your owne lyf & ye myzt, but sauf your pleasir I was so furyous in my quest that I wold not abyde, & that repenteth me & shal the dayes of my lyf. Truly saide Merlyn ye ouzt sore to repente it, for that lady was your own douzter begoten on the lady of the rule, & that knyght that was dedē was her loue, and shold haue wedded her, and he was a ryght good knyght of a yonge man and wold haue preued a good man, & to this court was he comyng & his name was sir Myles of the laūdys, & a knyzt cam behynde hym, & slewe him with a spere & his name is Lorayne le saueage a fals knyzt & a coward, & she for grete sorow & dole slewe her self with his swerd, and her name was Eleyne. And by cause ye wold not abyde and helpe her, ye shalle see youre best frende faylle yow whan ye be in the grettest distresse that euer ye were, or shalle be. And that penaūce god hath ordeyned yow for that dede, that he that ye shalle most truste to of ony man alyue, he shalle leue yow ther yē shalle be slayne. Me forthynketh said kynge Pellinore that this shalle me betyde but god may fordoo wel desteny. Thus whan the quest was done of the whyte herte, the whiche folowed syr gawayne and the quest of the brachet folowed of syr Tor Pellenors sone, & the quest of the lady that the knyghte tooke aweye, the whiche kyng Pellinore

at that tyme folowed. Thenne the kyng stablysshed all his knyghtes and gaf them that were of londes not ryche, he gaf them londes, and charged hem neuer to doo outragyousyte nor mordre, and alweyes to flee treason. Also by no meane to be cruel, but to gyue merey vnto hym that asketh mercy vpon payn of forfeture of their worship and lordship of kyng Arthur for euermore, and alweyes to doo ladyes, damoysels, and gentylwymmen socour vpon payne of dethe. Also that no man take noo batails in a wrongful quarel for noo lawe ne for noo worldes goodes. Vnto this were all the knyghtes sworne of the table round both old and yong. And euery yere were they sworne at the hyghe feest of Pentecost.

Explicit the weddynge of kynge Arthur.

Sequitur quartus liber.

Capitulū Primū.

OO after these questys of Syr Gawyne, Syre Tor, and kynge Pellinore, It felle so that Merlyn felle in a dottage on the damoisel that kyng Pellinore broughte to Courte, and she was one of the damoysels of the lake that hyzte Nyneue. But Merlyn wold lete haue her no rest but alweyes he wold be with her. And euer she maade Merlyn good chere tyl she had lerned of hym al maner thynge that she desyred and he was assoted vpon her that he myghte not be from her. Soo on a tyme he told kynge Arthur that he sholde not dure longe, but for al his craftes he shold be put in the erthe quyck and so he told the kynge many thynges that shold befalle, but alle-wayes he warned the kynge to kepe wel his swerd and the scaubard, for he told hym how the swerd and the scaubard shold be stolen by a woman from hym that he most trusted. Also he told kynge Arthur that he shold mysse hym, yet had ye leuer than al your landes to haue me ageyne. A sayd the kynge, syn ye knowe of your aduenture puruey for hit, and put awey by your craftes that

mysauenture. Nay said Merlyn it wylle not be, soo he departed from the kynge. And within a whyle the damoysel of the lake departed, and Merlyn wente with her euermore where some euer she wente. And oftymes merlyn wold haue had her pryuely awey by his subtyle craftes, thenne she made hym to swere that he shold neuer do none enchauntement vpon her yf he wold haue his wylle. And so he sware. so she and Merlyn wente ouer the see vnto the land of Benwyck there as kynge Ban was kynge that had grete warre ageynst kynge Claudas, and there Merlyn spake with kynge Bans wyf a fair lady and a good, and her name was Elayne, and there he sawe yonge Launcelot, there the quene made grete sorowe for the mortal werre y^{t} kyng claudas made on her lord and on her landes. Take none heuynesse said Merlyn, for this same child within this xx yere shall reuenge yow on kynge Claudas that all Crystendom shalle speke of it. And this same child shalle be the moost man of worship of the world, and his fyrst name is galahad, that knowe I wel said Merlyn. And syn ye haue confermed hym Launcelot; that is trouthe said the quene, his fyrst name was Galahad. O Merlyn said the quene shalle I lyue to see my sone suche a man of prowesse, ye lady on my parel ye shal see hit, and lyue many wynters after. And soo soone after the lady and Merlyn departed, and by the waye Merlyn shewed her many wondres, and cam in to Cornewaille. And alweyes Merlyn lay aboute the lady to haue her maydenhode, and she was euer passynge wery of hym, and fayne wold haue ben delyuerd of hym, for she was aferd of hym by cause he was a deuyls sone, and she coude not beskyfte hym by no meane.

And soo on a tyme it happed that Merlyn shewed to her in a roche where as was a greete wonder, and wroughte by enchauntement that wente vnder a grete stone. So by her subtyle wyrchynge she maade Merlyn to goo vnder that stone to lete her wete of the merueilles there, but she wroughte so ther for hym that he cam neuer oute for alle the crafte he coude doo. And so she departed and lefte Merlyn.

Capitulum Secundum.

And as kynge Arthur rode to Camelot, and helde ther a grete feest with myrthe and Joye, so soone after he retorned vnto Cardoylle, and there cam vnto Arthur newe tydynges that the kynge of Denmarke and the kynge of Ireland that was his broder and the kynge of the vale and the kynge of Soleyse, and the kynge of the yle of Longtaynse, al these fyue kynges with a grete hoost were entrid in to the lād of kynge Arthur and brente and slewe clene afore hem, both Cytees and castels that it was pyte to here. Allas sayd Arthur yet had I neuer reste one monethe syn I was crcwned kyng of this land. Now shalle I neuer reste tyl I mete with tho kynges in a fayre feld, that I make myn auowe for my true lyege peple shalle not be destroyed in my defaulte, goo with me who wille and abyde who that wylle. thenne the kynge lete wryte vnto kynge Pellenore and prayd hym in alle haste to make hym redy with suche peple as he myght lyztlyest rere and hye hym after in al hast. All the Barons were pryuely wrothe, that the kynge wold departe so sodenly, but the kynge by no meane wold abyde, but made wrytynge vnto them that were not there, and bad them hye after hym suche as were not at that tyme in the Courte. Thenne the kynge came to quene gweneuer and sayd lady make yow redy, for ye shall goo with me, for I may not longe mysse yow, ye shal cause me to be the more hardy, what auenture so befalle me. I wille not wete my lady to be in no ieopardy. Sire said she I am at your commaundement, and shalle be redy what tyme so ye be redy. So on the morne the kynge and the quene departed with suche felauship as they hadde, and came in to the Northe in to a forest besyde humber and there lodged hem.

Whanne the word & tydynge came vnto the fyue kynges aboue sayd that Arthur was besyde humber in a foreste thére was a knyght broder vnto one of the fyue kynges that gafe hem this counceille, ye knowe wel that syre Arthur hath the floure of Chyualrye of the world with hym as it is preued by the grete bataille he dyd with the xi kynges. And therfor hye vnto hym nyghte and daye tyl that we be nyghe hym, for the lenger he taryeth the bygger he

is, and we euer the waiker. And he is so couragyous of hym self that he is come to the felde with lytel peple. And therfore lete vs set vpon hym or day and we shalle slee doune of his knyghtes ther shal none escape.

Capitulum Tercium.

Unto this counceille these fyue kynges assented, and so they passed forth with her hoost thorow North walis and came vpon Arthur by nyghte and sett upon his hoost as the kynge and his knyghtes were in their pauelions, kynge Arthur was vnarmed, and had leid hym to rest with hys quene Gweneuer. Sir said syr kaynus it is not good we be vnarmed, we shalle haue no nede said syre Gawayne and Syr Gryflet that laye in a lytel pauelione by the kynge.

With that they herd a grete noyse and many cryed treson treson. Allas said kynge Arthur we ben bitrayed. Vnto armes felawes thenne he cryed, so they were armed anone at al poyntes. Thenne cam ther a wounded knyghte vnto the kynge & saide syr saue your self and my lady the quene for our hooste is destroyed and moche peple of ours slayne. Soo anone the kynge and the quene and the thre knyghtes took her horses & rode toward humber to passe ouer it, and the water was so rough that they were aferd to passe ouer. Now may ye chese sayd kynge Arthur whether ye wille abyde and take the aduentur on this syde, for and ye be taken, they wille slee yow. It were me leuer sayd the quene to dye in the water than to falle in your enemyes handes & there be slayne. And as they stode soo talkyng, syr kaynus sawe the fyue kynges comynge on horsbak by hem self alone with her speres in her handes euen toward hem, loo said syr kaynus yonder be the fyue kynges, lete vs go to them and matche hem, that were foly sayd sire gawayne, for we are but thre and they ben fyue, that is trouthe said syre Gryflet. No force said syr kay I wille vndertake for two of them, and thenne may ye thre vndertake for the other thre, and ther with al syr kay lete his hors renne as fast as he myghte and strake one of them thorow the shelde, and the body a fadom that the kynge felle to the erthe stark

dede. That sawe syr Gawayne and ranne vnto another kyng so hard that he smote hym thurgh the body. And ther with all kyng Arthur ran to another, and smote hym thurgh the body with a spere that he fylle to the erthe dede. Thenne syr Gryflet ranne vnto the iiii kyng and gaf hym suche a falle that his neck brake. Anone syr kay ranne vnto the fyfthe kynge and smote hym so hard on the helme that the stroke clafe the helme and the hede to the erthe, that was wel stryken sayd kynge Arthur, and worshipfully hast thow hold thy promesse, therfor I shal honoure the, whyle that I lyue, and ther with all they set the quene in a barge in to humber, but alweyes quene gweneuer praysed syr kay for his dedes, and sayd what lady that ye loue, and she loue yow not ageyne she were gretely to blame, and amonge ladyes said the Quene I shalle bere youre noble fame, for ye spak a grete word and fulfylled it worshipfully and therwith the quene departed. Thenne the kyng and the thre knyghtes rode in to the forest, for there they supposed to here of them that were escaped, and there he fond the most party of his peple, and told hem all how the fyue kynges were dede, and therfor lete vs hold vs to gyders tyll it be day, and whan their hoost haue aspyed that their chyuetayns be slayn they wille make suche dole that they shalle not mowe helpe hemself, and ryght so as the kynge said, so it was, for whan they fonde the fyue kynges dede, they made suche dole that they fell fro their horses. Ther with all cam kyng Arthur but with a fewe peple and slewe on the lyfte hand and on the ryght hand that wel nyhe ther escaped no man, but alle were slayne to the nombre of xxx M. And whan the bataille was all ended the kynge kneled doune and thanked god mekely, and thenne he sente for the quene and soone she was come, and she maade grete Joye of the ouercomynge of that bataille.

Capitulum iiii.

There with alle came one to kynge Arthur, and told hym that kyng Pellinore was within thre myle with a grete hoost, and he said, go vnto hym and lete hym vnderstande how we haue spedde. Soo

within a whyle kynge Pellinore cam with a grete hoost, and salewed the peple and the kyng, and ther was grete ioye made on euery syde. Thenne the kyng lete serche how moche people of his party ther was slayne. And ther were founde but lytel past two honderd men slayne and viii knyztes of the table round in their pauelions. Thenne the kynge lete rere and deuyse in the same place there as the batail was done a faire abbeye and endowed it wyth grete lyuelode and lete it calle the Abbey of la beale aduenture, but whanne somme of them cam in to their Countreyes therof the fyue kynges were kynges and told hem how they were slayne, ther was made grete dole. And alle kynge Arthurs enemyes, as the kynge of Northwales and the kynges of the North wyste of the bataille they were passynge heuy, and soo the kynge retorned vnto Camelot in hast. And whan he was come to Camelot, he called kynge Pellinore vnto hym sayd, ye vnderstand wel that we haue loste viii knyghtes of the best of the table round, and by your aduys we wille chese viii ageyne of the best we may fynde in this Courte. Syr said Pellinore, I shal counceille yow after my conceyte the best, there are in your Courte ful noble knyghtes bothe of old & yonge. And therfor by myn aduys ye shal chese half of the old and half of the yonge, whiche be the old said kyng Arthur. Syre said kynge Pellinore me semeth that kynge Uryence that hath wedded your syster Morgan le fay and the kynge of the lake and syr Heruyse de reuel a noble knyght, and syr galagars the iiii. this is wel deuysed said kyng Arthur and right soo shal it be. Now whiche are the four yong knyztes said Arthur. Syre saide Pellinore the fyrst is syr Gawayne your neuewe that is as good a knyght of his tyme, as ony is in this lād, And the second as me semeth best is syre Gryflet le fyse the dene that is a good knyght and ful desyrous in armes, and who may see hym lyue he shal preue a good knyghte. And the thyrd as me semeth is wel to be one of the knyghtes of the round table syr kay the seneschal for many tymes he hath done ful worshipfully. And now at your last bataille he dyd full honourably for to vndertake to slee two kynges. By my hede said Arthur he is best worthy to be a knyght of the round table of ony that ye haue reherced, and he had done no more prowesse in his lyf dayes.

Capitulum Quintum.

Now said kynge Pellenore I shalle putte to yow two knyghtes, and ye shalle chese whiche is moost worthy, that is Syr Bagdemagus and syr Tor my sone. But by cause Syre Tor is my sone I may not prayse hym, but els and he were not my sone, I durst saye that of his age ther is not in this land a better knyghte than he is nor of better condycions and lothe to doo ony wronge, and loth to take ony wronge. By my hede said Arthur he is a passyng good knyght, as ony ye spak of this day, that wote I wel said the kyng, for I haue sene hym preued but he seyth lytyll and he doth moche more, for I knowe none in al this courte & he were as wel borne on his moder syde as he is on your syde that is lyke hym of prowesse and of myghte. And therfor I wille haue hym at this tyme and leue syr Bagdemagus tyll another tyme. Soo whan they were so chosen by the assente of alle the barons, Soo were there founden in her syeges euery knyghtes names that here are reherced, and so were they set in their syeges, wherof syr Bagdemagus was wonderly wrothe that syr Tor was auaunced afore hym, and therfore sodenly he departed from the Courte and toke his squyer with hym, & rode longe in a forest tyll they came to a crosse and there alyzt and sayd his prayers deuoutely. The meane whyle his squyer founde wryten vpon the crosse that Bagdemagus shold neuer retorne vnto the Courte ageyne, tyll he had wonne a knyztes body of the round table body for body. lo syr said his squyer, here I fynde wrytyng of yow, therfor I rede yow retorne ageyne to the Courte, that shalle I neuer said Bagdemagus tyl men speke of me grete worship, and that I be worthy to be a knyghte of the round table, and soo he rode forthe. And ther by the way he founde a braūche of an holy herbe that was the sygne of the Sancgraill, and no knyght founde suche tokens but he were a good lyuer. So as sir Bagdemagus rode to see many aduentures, it happed hym to come to the roche, ther as the lady of the lake had put Merlyn vnder the stone, and there he herde hym make grete dole, wherof syre Bagdemagus wold haue holpen hym and wente vnto the grete stone, and he was so heuy that an C men myght not

lyfte hyt up. Whan Merlyn wyste he was here he bad leue his labour, for al was in vayne, for he myght neuer be holpen but by her that put hym ther, and so Bagdemagus departed and dyd many auentures and preued after a full good knyght, and came ageyne to the Courte and was made knyght of the round table. So on the morne ther felle newe tydynges and other auentures.

Capitulum Sextum.

THENNE it befelle that Arthur and many of his knyghtes rode on huntynge in to a grete forest, and it happed kyng Arthur, kynge Uryens and syr Accolon of gaulle folowed a grete herte for they thre were wel horsed, and soo they chaced so fast that within a whyle they thre were thenne x myle from her felauship. And at the last they chaced so sore that they slewe theyr horses vndernethe them. thenne were they al thre on foote, and euer they sawe the herte afore them passynge wery and enbusshed. What wille we doo said kyng arthur we are hard bestad, lete vs goo on foote said kyng Uryens tyl we may mete with some lodgynge. Thenne were they ware of the herte that lay on a grete water banke, and a brachet bytynge on his throte and mo other houndes cam after. Thenne kynge Arthur blewe the pryse and dyghte the herte. Thenne the kynge loked aboute the world, and sawe afore hym in a grete water a lytel ship al apparailled with sylke doune to the water, and the shyp cam ryghte vnto hem and lāded on the sandes. Thenne Arthur wente to the banke & loked in, and sawe none erthely creature therin. Sirs said the kyng come thens, and lete vs see what is in this ship. Soo they wente in al thre and founde hit rychely behanged with clothe of sylke. By thenne it was derke nyghte, and there sodenly were aboute them an C torches sette vpon alle the sydes of the shyp bordes and it gaf grete lyghte. And ther with all there cam out twelue fayr damoysels and salewed kynge Arthur on her knees and called hym by his name, and sayd he was ryght welcome, and suche chere as they had he shold haue of the best, the kynge thanked hem fayre. There with all they lad the kyng and his two felawes in to a

fair chambre, and ther was a clothe leyd rychely bysene of al that longed vnto a tabel, and there were they serued of al wynes and metes that they coude thynke, of that the kynge had grete merueille, for he ferd neuer better in his lyf as for one souper. And so when they had souped at her leyser, kyng Arthur was ledde vnto a chamber, a rycher besene chamber sawe he neuer none, and soo was kynge Uryens serued, and ledde in to suche another chābyr, and syr Accolon was ledde in to the thyrd chamber passynge rychely and wel bysene, and so were they layde in theire beddes easyly. And anone they felle on slepe, and slepte merueillously sore all the nyght. And on the morowe kynge Uryens was in Camelott abed in his wyues armes Morgan le fay. And whan he awoke, he had grete merueylle, how he cam there, for on the euen afore he was two dayes Journey frō Camelot. And whan kyng Arthur awoke he found hym self in a derke pryson herynge aboute hym many complayntes of woful knyghtes.

Capitulum Septimum.

What are ye that soo complayne said kynge Arthur. We ben here xx knyghtes prysoners sayd they, & some of vs haue layne here seuen yere and somme more and somme lasse, for what cause sayd Arthur. We shalle telle yow said the knyghtes, this lord of this castel his name is syr Damas, & he is the falsest knyght that lyueth, and ful of treason, and a very coward as ony lyueth, and he hath a yonger broder a good knyghte of prowesse, his name is syr Onztlake, and this traytour Damas the elder broder wylle gyue hym noo parte of his lyuelode. But as syre Ontzlake kepeth thorow prowesse of his handes, and so he kepeth from hym a ful fair maner and a ryche and therin syre Ontzlake dwelleth worshipfully, and is wel biloued of al peple, & this syre Damas our maister is as euyll beloued for he is without mercy, and he is a coward, and grete werre hath ben betwyxe them bothe, but Ontzlake hath euer the better, and euer he profereth syre Damas to fyghte for the lyuelode body for body, but he wylle not doo, other els to fynde a knyghte to fyghte for hym. Unto that

syr Damas hath graunted to fynde a knyghte, but he is so euyll by-loued and hated, that there is neuer a knyghte wylle fyghte for hym. And whan Damas sawe this that ther was neuer a knyght, wold fyghte for hym, he hath daily layn a wayte with many knyghtes with hym, and taken alle the knyghtes in this countrey to see and aspye her auentures, he hath taken hem by force and broughte hem to his pryson, and so he tooke vs seueratly as we rode on oure auentures, & many good knyztes haue dyed in this pryson for hongre to the nombre of xviii knyghtes. And yf ony of us alle that here is or hath ben wold haue foughten with his broder Ontzlake, he wold haue delyuerd vs, but for by cause this Damas is so fals and so ful of treason we wold neuer fyghte for hym to dye for it. And we be soo lene for hongre that vnnethe we may stande on oure feete. god delyuer yow for his mercy sayd Arthur. Anone there with alle ther cam a damoysel vnto Arthur, and asked hym what chere. I can not say sayd he, sir sayd she and ye wylle fyghte for my lord ye shall be delyuerd oute of pryson, and els ye escape neuer the lyf. Now sayd Arthur that is hard, yet had I leuer to fyghte with a knyght than to dye in pryson, with. this sayd Arthur I may be delyuerd and alle these prysoners I wylle doo the batail, yes said the damoysel. I am redy sayd Arthur and I had hors and armour, ye shall lacke none said the damoysel. Me semeth damoysel I shold haue sene yow in the Courte of Arthur. Nay said the damoysel I cam neuer there, I am the lordes doughter of this castel, yet was she fals for she was one of the damoysels of Morgan le fay. Anone she wente vnto syr Damas and told hym how he wold doo bataille for hym, and so he sente for Arthur. And whan he cam he was wel coloured and wel made of his lymmes, that al knyztes that sawe hym said it were pyte that suche a knyghte shold dye in pryson, soo syr Damas and he were agreed that he shold fyghte for hym vpon this couenaũt that all other knyghtes shold be delyuerd. And vnto that was syr Damas sworne vnto Arthur, and also to doo the bataille to the vttermest. And with that all the xx knyghtes were brought oute of the derke pryson in to the halle and delyuerd, and so they all abode to see the bataille.

Capitulum Octauum.

Now torne we vnto Accolon of Gaulle that whanne he awoke, he found hym self by a depe welle syde within half a foote in grete perylle of dethe. And there cam oute of that fontayne a pype of syluer, and oute of that pype ranne water all on hyhe in a stone of marbel. Whan Syre Accolon sawe this, he blessyd hym and sayd Jhesu saue my lorde kyng Arthur and kynge Uryens, for these damoysels in this ship haue bitrayed vs, they were deuyls and noo wymmen. And yf I may escape this misauenture, I shalle destroye all where I may fynde these fals damoysels that vsen enchaütementys.

Ryght with that ther cam a dwarf with a grete mouthe & a flat nose and salewed syre Accolon and said how he came from Quene Morgan le fay, and she greteth yow wel, and byddeth yow be of strong herte, for ye shal fyzte to morne with a knyghte at the houre of pryme. And therfore she hath sente yow here Excalibur Arthurs swerd and the scaübard, and she byddeth yow as ye loue her that ye doo the batail to the vttermest without ony mercy lyke as ye had promysed her whā ye spake to gyder in pryuete. And what damoysel that bryngeth her the knyghtes hede whiche ye shal fyghte with al, she wille make her a quene. Now I vnderstand yow wel sayd Accolon. I shalle holde that I haue promysed her now I haue the swerd. whan sawe ye my lady Quene Morgan le fay. Ryghte late sayd the dwarf. thenne Accolon tooke hym in his armes, and said recommaunde me vnto my lady Quene, and telle her all shal be done that I haue promysed her, and els I wille dye for hit. Now I suppose said Accolon she hath made alle these craftes and enchauntement for this bataille, ye may wel bileue it said the dwarf. Ryzt so there cam a knyghte and a lady with syxe squyers, and salewed Accolon, and prayd hym for to aryse and come and reste hym at his maner, and so Accolon mounted vpon a voyde hors, & wente with the knyghte vnto a fayre maner by a pryory, and there he had passynge good chere. Thenne sir Damas sente vnto his broder syr Ontzelake, and badde make hym redy by to morne at the houre of

pryme, and to be in the felde to fyghte wyth á good knyght, for he had founden a good knyght that was redy to doo bataill at all poyntes. Whan this word cam vnto sir Ontzelake, he was passyng heuy, for he was wounded a lytel to fore thorow bothe his thyes with a spere, and made grete dole. But as he was wounded he wold haue taken the bataille on hand. Soo it happed at that tyme by the meanes of Morgan le fay Accolon was with syr Ontzelake lodged, and whan he herd of that bataille and how Ontzelake was woūded, he sayd that he wold fyghte for hym by cause Morgan le fay had sente hym Excalibur and the shethe for to fyzte with the knyght on the morne. This was the cause syr Accolon toke the bataille on hand, thenne syre Ontzelake was passynge glad, and thāked syr Accolon with alle his herte that he wold do so moche for hym, & ther with al syr Ontzelake sente word vnto his broder syre Damas, that he had a knyzte y^t^ for hym shold bé redy in the felde by the houre of pryme. Soo on the morne syr Arthur was armed and wel horsed, and asked syr Damas whan shalle we to the felde, syr said syr Damas ye shalle here masse, and so Arthur herd a masse. And whan masse was done, there cam a squyer on a grete hors & asked syr Damas yf his knyght were redy, for oure knyght is redy in the felde. Thenne syre Arthur mounted vpon horsbak, & there were alle the knyghtes and comyns of that countrey, & so by alle aduyses ther were chosen xii good men of the countrey for to wayte vpon the two knyghtes. And ryght as Arthur was on horsbak, ther cam a damoisel from Morgan le fay and broughte vnto syr Arthur a swerd lyke vnto Excalibur, and the scaubard, and sayd vnto Arthur Morgan le fay sendeth here your swerd for grete loue, and he thanked her, & wende it had ben so, but she was fals, for the swerd and the scaubard was counterfeet & brutyll and fals.

Capitulum ix.

And thenne they dressyd hem on bothe partyes of the felde, & lete their horses renne so fast that eyther smote other in the myddes of the shelde, with their speres hede, that bothe hors and man wente

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to the erthe. And thenne they sterte vp bothe, and pulled oute their swerdys, the meane whyle that they were thus at the bataille cam the damoysel of the lake in to the felde, that put Merlyn vnder the stone, & she cam thydder for loue of kynge Arthur, for she knewe how Morgan le fay had soo ordeyned, that kynge Arthur shold haue ben slayne that daye, and therfor she cam to saue his lyf. And so they went egrely to the bataille, and gaf many grete strokes, but alweyes Arthurs swerd bote not lyke Accolon swerd. But for the most party euery stroke that Accolon gaf he wounded sore Arthur, that it was merueylle he stode. And alweyes his blood fylle from hym fast. Whan Arthur beheld the ground so sore bebledde he was desmayed, and thenne he demed treason that his swerd was chaunged, for his swerd boote not styl as it was wonte to do, therfor he dredde hym sore to be dede, for euer hym semed that the swerd in Accolons hand was Excalibur, for at euery stroke that Accolon stroke he drewe blood on Arthur. Now knyghte said Accolon vnto Arthur kepe the wel from me, but Arthur ansuerd not ageyne, and gaf hym suche a buffet on the helme that he made hym to stoupe nygh fallynge doune to the erthe. Thenne syr Accolon withdrewe hym a lytel, and cam on with Excalibur on hyghe, and smote syr Arthur suche a buffet that he felle nyhe to the erthe. Thenne were they wroth bothe, and gaf eche other many sore strokes, but alweyes syr Arthur lost so moche blood that it was merueille he stode on his feet, but he was soo ful of knyghthode that knyghtly he endured the payne. And syr Accolon lost not a dele of blood, therfor he waxt passynge lyghte, and syr Arthur was passynge feble, and wende veryly to haue dyed, but for al that he made countenaunce as though he myghte endure, and helde Accolon as shorte as he myght. But Accolon was so bolde by cause of Excalibur that he waxed passynge hardy. But alle men that beheld hym sayd they sawe neuer knyghte fyghte so wel as Arthur dyd consyderyng the blood that he bled. Soo was all the peple sory for hym, but the two bretheren wold not accorde, thenne alweyes they fought to gyders as fyers knyghtes, and syre Arthur withdrewe hym a lytel for to reste hym, and syre Accolon called hym to bataille and said it is no tyme for me to suffre the to reste. And therwith he cam fyersly vpon Arthur,

and syre Arthur was wrothe for the blood that he had lost, and smote Accolon on hyhe vpon the helme soo myztely that he made hym nyhe to falle to the erthe. And therwith Arthurs swerd brast at the crosse and felle in the grasse amonge the blood and the pomel and the sure handels he helde in his handes. When syr arthur sawe that, he was in grete fere to dye, but alweyes he helde vp his shelde and lost no ground nor bated no chere.

Capitulum x.

THENNE syre Accolon beganne with wordes of treason, and sayd knyghte thow arte ouercome, and mayste not endure and also thow arte wepenles, and thow hast loste moche of thy blood, and I am ful lothe to slee the, therfor yelde the to me as recreaunt. Nay saide syre Arthur I maye not so, for I haue promysed to doo the bataille to the vttermest by the feythe of my body whyle me lasteth the lyf, and therfor I had leuer to dye with honour than to lyue with shame. And yf it were possyble for me to dye an C tymes I had leuer to dye so ofte, than yelde me to the, for though I lacke wepen, I shalle lacke no worship. And yf thow slee me wepenles that shalle be thy shame. Wel sayd Accolon as for the shame I wyl not spare. Now kepe the from me for thow arte but a dede mā. And therwith Accolon gaf hym suche a stroke that he felle nyghe to the erthe, and wolde haue had Arthur to haue cryed hym mercy. But syre Arthur pressed vnto Accolon with his sheld, and gaf hym with the pomel in his hand suche a buffet that he went thre strydes abak. Whan the damoisel of the lake beheld arthur, how ful of prowesse his body was & the fals treson that was wrouzt for hym to haue had hym slayn she had grete pyte that so good a knyzt & suche a mā of worship shold so be destroyed. And at the next stroke syr Accolon stroke hym suche a stroke that by the damoysels enchauntement the swerd Excalibur felle oute of Accolons hande to the erthe. And therwith alle Syre Arthur lyghtely lepte to hit, and gate hit in his hand, and forthwith al he knewe that it was his suerd Excalibur, & sayd thow hast ben from me al to long, & moche dommage hast thow

done me, & ther with he aspyed the scaubard hangynge by his syde, and sodenly he sterte to hym and pulled the scaubard from hym and threwe hit fro hym as fer as he myghte throwe hit. O knyghte saide Arthur this daye hast thow done me grete dommage with this swerd. Now are ye come vnto your dethe, for I shalle not waraunt yow but ye shalle as wel be rewarded with this swerde or euer we departe as thow hast rewarded me, for moche payne haue ye made me to endure, and moche blood haue I lost. And therwith syr Arthur russhed on hym with alle his myghte and pulled hym to the erthe, and thene russhed of his helme, and gaf hym suche a buffet on the hede that the blood cam oute at his eres, his nose & his mouthe. Now wylle I slee the said Arthur. Slee me ye may wel said Accolon and it please yow, for ye ar the best knyghte that euer I fonde, and I see wel that god is with yow. But for I promysed to doo this batail said Accolon to the vttermest and neuer to be recreaunt whyle I lyued, therfore shal I neuer yelde me with my mouthe, but god doo with my body what he wyll. Thenne syr Arthur remembrid hym and thoughte he shold haue sene this knyghte. Now telle me said Arthur or I wylle slee the, of what coūtrey art thou and of what courte. Syre knyghte sayd syr Accolon I am of the courte of kynge Arthur, & my name is Accolon of gaulle. Thenne was Arthur more desmayed than he was before hand. For thenne he remembryd hym of his syster Morgan le fay, and of the enchauntement of the ship. O syre knyght sayd he, I pray yow telle me who gaf yow this swerd and by whom ye had it.

Capitulum xi.

THENNE syre Accolon bethouzte hym and said wo worth this swerd, for by hit haue I geten my dethe, it may wel be, said the kynge. Now syre said Accolon I wil telle yow this swerd hath ben in my kepynge the moost party of this twelue moneth. And Morgan le fay kynge Uryens wyf sente it me yester daye by a dwerf to this entente that I shold slee kynge Arthur her broder. For ye shall vnderstand kynge Arthur is the man in the world that she moost

hateth by cause he is moost of worship and of prowesse of ony of her blood. Also she loueth me oute of mesure as paramour, and I her ageyne. And yf she myghte brynge aboute to slee Arthur by her craftes, she wold slee her husband kynge Uryens lyghtely. And thenne hadde she me deuysed to be kyng in this land, and soo to regne, and she to be my quene, but that is now done saide Accolon, for I am sure of my dethe. Wel sayd syre Arthur, I fele by yow ye wold haue ben kynge in this land. It had ben grete dommage to haue destroyed your lord sayd Arthur, it is trouth said Accolon, but now I haue told yow trouthe, wherfore I praye yow telle me of whens ye are and of what courte. O Accolon sayd kynge Arthur now I lete the wete, that I am kynge Arthur to whome thow haste done grete dommage. Whanne Accolon herd that, he cryed on lowde, fayre swete lord haue mercy on me, for I knewe not yow. O syr Accolon sayd kynge Arthur mercy shalt thow haue, by cause I fele by thy wordes at this tyme, thow knowest not my persone. But I vnderstand wel by thy wordes that thow hast agreed to the dethe of my persone, and therfore thow arte a traytour, but I wyte the the lasse, for my syster Morgan le fay by her fals craftes made the to agree and consente to her fals lustes, but I shalle be sore auenged vpon her and I lyue that alle Crystendome shalle speke of it, god knoweth, I haue honoured her and worshipped her more than alle my kynne, and more haue I trusted her than myn owne wyf and alle my kynne after.

Thenne syr Arthur called the kepars of the felde and said Syrs cometh hyder, for here are we two knyghtes that haue foughten vnto a grete dommage vnto vs both, and lyke echone of vs to haue slayne other, yf it had happed soo. And hadde ony of vs knowen other, here had ben no bataille, nor stroke stryken. Thenne al a lowde cryed Accolon vnto alle the knyghtes and men that were thēe there gadred tò gyder, and sayd to them in this manere, O lordes this noble knyghte that I haue foughten with all, the whiche me sore repenteth is the mooste man of prowesse of manhode and of worship in the world, for it is hym self kynge Arthur our alther liege lord, & with myshap and with mysauēture haue I done this bataill with the kyng and lord that I am holden with all.

Capitulum xii.

THENNE alle the peple felle doune on her knees and cryed kynge Arthur mercy, mercy shalle ye haue sayd Arthur, here maye ye see what auentures befallen oftyme of erraunte knyghtes how that I haue foughten with a knyght of myn owne vnto my grete dommage and his bothe.

But syrs by cause I am sore hurte and he bothe, and I had grete nede of a lytel rest, ye shalle vnderstande the oppynyon betwixe yow two bretheren as to the syre Damas, for whom I haue ben champyon and wonne the feld of this knyghte, yet wylle I juge by cause ye syre Damas are called an orgulous knyghte and full of vylony and not worthe of prowesse of youre dedes, therfor I wylle that ye gyue vnto your broder alle the hole manoir with the appertenaüce vnder thys forme, that sir Ontzelake hold the manoir of yow, and yerely to gyue yow a palfrey to ryde vpon, for that wylle become yow better to ryde on than vpon a courser. Also I charge the syre Damas vpon payne of deth, that thow neuer destresse no knyztes erraunte that ryde on their aduenture. And also that thow restore these xx knyghtes that thow hast longe kepte prysoners of all their harneis that they be content for, and yf ony of hem come to my court and complayne of the, by my hede thou shalt dye therfore. Also syre Ontzelake as to yow by cause ye are named a good knyghte and ful of prowesse and true and gentyl in all youre dedes this shalle be youre charge. I wylle gyue yow that in al goodely haste ye come vnto me and my courte and ye shalle be a knyghte of myne, and yf your dedes be there after I shall so proferre yow by the grace of god that ye shalle in shorte tyme be in ease for to lyue as worshipfully as your broder syre Damas. God thanke your largenesse of your goodenes & of your bounte. I shall be from hens forward at all tymes at your commaundement. For syr said syr Ontzelake as god wold as I was hurte but late with an aduentures knyght thurgh both my thyes that greued me sore, & els had I done this bataille with yow, god wold sayd Arthur it had ben so, for thenne had not I ben hurte as I am. I shalle telle yow the cause why, for I had not ben

hurte as I am hadde not ben myne owne sweŕd, that was stolen from me by treason. And this bataille was ordeyned afore hand to haue slayne me, and so it was brouzte to the purpos by fals treason and by fals enchauntement. Allas said syr Ontzelake that is greete pyte that euer soo noble a man as ye are of your dedes and prowesse, that ony man or woman myzt fynde in their hertes to worcke ony treason ageynst yow. I shalle reward them said Arthur in short tyme by the grace of god. Now telle me said Arthur how fer am I from Camelot, syr ye are two dayes iourney ther fro. I wold fayn be at some place of worship said syr Arthur that I myghte reste me. Syre said syr Ontzelake, here by is a ryche abbey of your elders foũdacyon of Nonnes but thre myle hens. So the kynge took his leue of alle the peple, and mounted vpon horsbak, and sir Accolon with hym. And whan they were come to the Abbaye, he lete fetche leches and serche his woundes and Accolons bothe, but syr Accolon dyed within four dayes, for he had bled soo moche blood that he myghte not liue, but kyng Arthur was wel recouerd. Soo whan Accolon was dede, he lete sende hym on an horsbere with syxe knyghtes vnto Camelot, and said, bere hym to my syster Morgan le fay, and say that I sende her hym to a presente, and telle her I haue my swerd Excalibur and the scaubard, soo they departed with the body.

Capitulum xiii.

THE meane whyle Morgan le fay hadde wend kynge Arthur had ben dede, soo on a day she aspyed kynge Uryens lay in his bedde slepynge, thenne she called vnto her a mayden of her counceyll, & said go fetche me my lordes swerd for I sawe neuer better tyme to slee hym than now.

O Madame sayd the damoysel, and ye slee my lord ye can neuer escape. Care not yow said Morgan le fay, for now I see my tyme in the whiche it is best to doo hit, And therfor hye the fast and fetche me the suerd. Thẽne the damoisel departed & fonde syre Uwayne slepynge vpon a bedde in another chamber soo she wente vnto sire Uwayne and awaked hym, and badde hym aryse and wayte

on my lady youre moder, for she wille slee the kynge your fader slepynge in his bedde, for I goo to fetche his swerd. Wel said syr Uwayne go on your waye, and lete me dele. Anone the damoysel brought Morgan the swerd with quakynge handes, and lyghtely took the swerd, & pulled it out, and wente boldely vnto the beddes syde, and awayted how and where she myght sle hym best. And as she lyfte vp the swerd to smyte, syr Uwayne lepte vnto his moder and caughte her by the hand and sayd, A fende what wilt thow do. And thow were not my moder with this swerd I shold smyte of thy hede. A sayd syr Uwayn men saith that Merlyn was begoten of a deuylle, but I may saye an erthely deuylle bare me. O fayre sone Uwayne haue mercy vpon me. I was tempted with a deuylle, wherfore I crye the mercy. I wylle neuer more doo soo and saue my worship and discouer me not. On this couenaunt said syr Uwayne I wille forgyue it yow, soo ye wille neuer be aboute to doo suche dedes. Nay sone said she, & that I make yow assuraunce.

Capitulum xiiii.

Thenne came tydynges vnto Morgan le fay that Accolon was dede, and his body brought vnto the chirche, and how kynge Arthur had his swerd ageyne. But whanne Quene Morgan wyste that Accolon was dede, she was soo sorouful that nere hir herte to brast. But by cause she wold not it were knowen, oute ward she kepte her countenaunce, & maade no semblaunt of sorowe. But wel she wyste and she abode tyll her broder Arthur cam thyder, there shold no gold goo for her lyf.

Thenne she wente vnto Quene Gweneuer, and asked her leue to ryde in to the countreye, ye maye abyde sayde Quene Gweneuer tyll youre brother the kynge come home. I maye not sayde Morgan le fay, for I haue suche hasty tydynges, that I maye not tary. Wel saide Gueneuer ye maye departe whanne ye wille. Soo erly on the morne or hit was daye she tooke her hors and rode alle that daye and mooste parte of the nyghte. And on the morn by none she cam to the same Abbay of Nonnes, where as lay kyng arthur, & she

knowyng he was there she asked where he was. And they ansuerd how he had leyd hym in his bed to slepe, for he had had but lytel reste these thre nyghtes. Wel said she I charge yow that none of yow awake hym tyl I doo, and thenne she alyghte of her hors, & thoughte for to stele awey Excalibur his swerd, and soo she wente streyghte vnto his chamber. And noo man durste dysobeye her commaundement, and there she fond Arthur a slepe in his bedde and Excalibur in his ryght hand naked. Whan she sawe that she was passynge heuy that she myghte not come by the swerd withoute she had awaked hym, and thenne she wyst wel she had ben dede. Thenne she tooke the scaubard and wente her wey on horsbak. Whan the kynge awoke and myssed his scaubard, he was wrothe, and he asked who had ben there, and they said his syster quene Morgan had ben ther, and had put the scaubard vnder her mantel and was gone. Allas sayd Arthur falsly ye haue watched me. Syre sayd they alle we durste not disobeye your systers commaundement. A said the kynge lete fetche the best hors maye be founde, and byd syre Ontzlake arme hym in al hast, and take another good hors and ryde with me. Soo anone the kynge and Ontzelake were wel armed, and rode after this lady, and soo they cam by a crosse and found a Cowherd, and they asked the poure man yf ther cam ony lady late rydynge that way. Syre said this poure man, ryght late cam a lady rydynge with a xl horses, and to yonder forest she rode. Thenne they spored theire horses, and folowed fast. And within a whyle Arthur had a syghte of Morgan le fay, thenne he chaced as fast as he myghte. Whanne she aspyed hym folowynge her, she rode a gretter paas thorowe the forest tyl she cam to a playne. And whanne she sawe she myghte not escape, she rode vnto a lake ther by, & sayd what soo euer come of me, my broder shall not haue this scaubard. And thenne she lete throwe the scaubard in the depest of the water soo it sanke, for it was hevy of gold and precious stones. Thenne she rode in to a valeye where many grete stones were. And whan she sawe she muste be ouertake she shope her self hors and man by enchauntemēt vnto a grete marbyl stone. Anone with al cam Syr Arthur, and syr Ontzelake where as the kynge myght knowe his syster and her men, and one knyght from another. A sayd

the kynge here may ye see the vengeaunce of god, and now am I sory that this mysauenture is befalle, & thenne he loked for the scaubard, but it wold not be founde, so he retorned to the Abbeye there he came fro. So whan Arthur was gone, she torned alle in to the lykenesse as she and they were before, and sayd syrs now may we goo where we wylle.

Capitulum xv.

THENNE said Morgan sawe ye Arthur my broder, ye said her knyghtes ryght wel, and that ye shold haue founde and we myghte haue stered from one stede, for by his armyuestal contenaunce he wold haue caused vs to haue fled. I byleue yow said Morgan. Anone after as she rode she met a knyght ledyng another knyzt on his hors before hym bounde hand and foote blyndefeld to haue drouned hym in a fontayne, whan she sawe this knyzt so boũde, she asked hym what wylle ye doo with that knyght, lady said he I wylle drowne hym, for what cause she asked, for I fonde hym with my wyf, and she shalle haue the same dethe anone, that were pyte sayd Morgan le fay. Now what saye ye knyzt is it trouthe y^t^ he saith of yow she said to the knyght that shold be drowned, nay truly madame he seith not ryght on me. Of whens be ye sayd Morgan le fay and of what countre. I am of the Courte of kynge Arthur, and my name is Manassen cosyn vnto Accolon of gaulle, ye say wel said she, and for the loue of hym ye shalle be delyuerd, and ye shalle haue your aduersary in the same caas ye be in. So Manessen was losed & the other knyght bounde. And anone Manessen vnarmed hym and armed hym self in his harneis, and soo mounted on horsbak, and the knyght afore hym and soo threwe hym in to the fontayne and drowned hym. And thenne he rode vnto Morgan ageyne, & asked yf she wold ony thyng vnto kynge Arthur. Telle hym that I rescued the, not for the loue of hym but for the loue of Accolon, and telle hym I fere hym not whyle I can make me and them that ben with me in lykenes of stones. And lete hym wete I can doo moche more whan I see my tyme. And so she departed in to the countrey of Gorre,

and there was she rychely receyued, and maade her castels and townes passynge stronge, for alweyes she drad moche kynge Arthur. Whanne the kynge had wel rested hym at the Abbey he rode vnto Camelot, and fonde his quene and his barons ryght glad of his comynge. And whan they herd of his straunge auentures as is afore reherced, they alle hadde merueille of the falshede of Morgan le fay, many knyghtes wysshed her brent, thenne cam Manessen to courte and told the kyng of his auenture, Well said the kynge she is a kynde syster. I shalle soo be auengid on her and I lyue, that alle Crystendome shalle speke of hit. So on the morne ther came a damoisel from Morgan to the kynge and she brought with her the rychest mantel that euer was sene in that Courte, for it was sette as ful of precious stones as one myght stand by another, and there were the rychest stones that euer the kynge sawe. And the damoysel saide youre syster sendeth yow this mantel, and desyreth that ye shold take this gyfte of her. And in what thyng she hath offended you she wille amende it at youre owne pleasyr. Whan the kyng beheld this mantel it pleasyd hym moche, but he said but lytel.

Capitulum xvi.

Wyth that came the damoysel of the lake vnto the kyng and said syr I must speke with yow in pryuyte, say on said the kynge what ye wille. Syr sayd the damoysel put not on yow this mantel tyl ye haue sene more, and in no wyse lete it not come on yow nor on no knyghte of yours tyl ye commaunde the brynger therof to put it vpon her, wel said kynge Arthur, It shalle be done as ye counceille me. And thenne he said vnto the damoysel that cam fro his sister, damoisel this mantel that ye haue brought me I wille see it vpon yow, syr she said, it wille not biseme me to were a kynges garment, by my hede said Arthur, ye shalle were it or it come on my bak or ony mans that here is, and so the kyng made it to be putt vpon her. And forth with al she felle doune dede, and neuer more spake word after and brente to coles. Thenne was the kyng wonderly wrothe

more than he was to fore hand, and sayd vnto kynge Uryens my syster your wyf is alwey aboute to bytraye me, and wel I wote outher ye or my neuewe youre sone is of counceille with her to haue me destroyed. But as for yow said the kyng to kynge Uryens I deme not gretely that ye be of her counceill. For Accolon confessyd to me by his own mouth that she wold haue destroyed yow as wel as me therfor I hold yow excused. But as for your sone Syr Uwayn I hold hym suspect, therefore I charge yow put hym oute of my courte. So syr Uwayne was discharged. And whanne Syr Gawayne wyst that he made hym redy to go with hym, & said who so bannyssheth my cosyn germayn, shal bannysshe me. Soo they two departed, and rode in to a grete forest, and soo they came to an Abbay of Monkes, and ther were wel lodged. But whanne the kynge wyst that syr Gawayne was departed from the Courte, ther was made grete sorowe amonge alle the estates. Now sayd Gaherys Gawayns broder we haue lost two good knyghtes for the loue of one. So on the morne they herd their masses in the abbay, and so they rode forth tyl that they came to a grete forest, thenne was syr Gawayne ware in a valey by a turret xii fayre damoysels, and two knyghtes armed on grete horses, and the damoysels wente to and fro by a tree. And thenne was syr Gawayne ware how there henge a whyte shelde on that tree. And euer as the damoysels cam by it, they spytte vpon it, and some threwe myre vpon the sheld.

Capitulum xvii.

Thenne syr Gawayne and syr Uwayne wente and salewed them, and asked why they dyd that despyte to the shelde. Syrs saiden the damoysels, we shalle telle yow. There is a knyght in this coũtrey that oweth this whyte sheld and he is a passyng good man of his handes, but he hateth al ladyes and gentylwymmen, and therfor we doo alle this despyte to the shelde. I shal say yow said syr gawayne, hit bysemeth euylle a good knyghte to despyse all ladyes and gentilwymmen. And perauentur though he hate yow he hath

somme (certayne cause *). And parauenture he loueth in somme other places ladyes and gentylwymmen, and to be loued agéyne, and he be suche a mā of prowesse as ye speke of. Now what is his name, syr sayd they, his name is Marhaus the kynges sone of Irelond. I knowe hym wel sayd syre Uwayne, he is a passynge good knyght as ony is on lyue, for I sawe hym ones preued at a Justes where many knyghtes were gadered, and that tyme ther myghte no man withstande hym. A sayd syr Gawayne, Damoysels me thynketh ye are to blame, for hit is to suppose, he that henge that sheld ther, he wille not be longe ther fro, & thenne may tho knyghtes matche hym on horsbak, and that is more your worship than thus. For I wille abyde no lenger to see a knyghtes sheld dishonoured. And therwith syre Uwayne and Gawayne departed a lytel fro them. And thenne were they ware where syre Marhaus cam rydynge on a grete hors streyghte toward them. And whanne the xii damoysels sawe syr Marhaus they fled in to the turret as they were wylde so that somme of them felle by the wey. Thenne the one of the knyghtes of the Toure dressid his shelde and said on hyghe syr Marhaus defende the, and soo they ranne to gyders that the knyzt brake his spere on Marhaus, & Marhaus smote hym so hard that he brake his neck and the hors back. That sawe the other knyght of the turret and dressyd hym toward Marhaus, and they mette so egrely to gyders that the knyght of the Turret was soone smyten doune hors and man stark dede.

Capitulum xviii.

And thenne syre Marhaus rode vnto his shelde, and sawe how it was defowled, and sayd of this despyte I am a parte auenged. But for her loue that gaf me this whyte shelde I shalle were the, and hange myn where thow was and soo he hanged it aboute his neck. Thenne he rode streyght vnto syr Gawayne and to syr Uwayne, and asked them what they dyd there. They ansuerd hym that they cam from kynge Arthurs courte for to see auentures. Wel sayd syre Mar-

* These two words *not* in the original, but are in the second edition, and are necessary to render the passage intelligible.

haus here am I redy an auentures knyghte that wille fulfylle ony aduenture that ye wylle desyre. And soo departed fro them, to fetche his raunge, lete hym goo seid syr Uwayn vnto syre Gawayne, for he is a passynge good knyghte as ony is lyuynge. I wold not by my wille that ony of vs were matched with hym. Nay said sir Gawayne not so, it were shame to vs were he not assayed were he neuer soo good a knyghte, wel said syr Uwayne I wylle assaye hym afore yow, for I am more weyker than ye. And yf he smyte me doune, thenne may ye reuenge me, soo these two knyghtes cam to gyders with grete raundon that syr Uwayne smote syr Marhaus that his spere braste in pyeces on the shelde, and Syre Marhaus smote hym so sore that hors and man he bare to the erthe, and hurte syre Uwayne on the lyfte syde. Thenne syr Marhaus torned his hors and rode toward Gawayne with his spere, and when syr Gawayne sawe that, he dressid his sheld, and they auentryd their speres, and they cam to gyders with alle the myzte of their horses, that eyther knyght smote other so hard in myddes of theyr sheldes, but syr Gawayns spere brak, but sir marhaus spere helde. And therwith syre Gawayne and his hors russhed doune to the erthe. And lyghtly syr Gawayne rose on his feet, and pulled out his swerd, and dressyd hym toward syr Marhaus on foote, and syr marhaus sawe that, and pulled oute his swerd and beganne to come to syr Gawayne on horsbak. Syre knyght said syr gawayn alyzte on foote or els I wylle slee thy hors, gramercy sayd syr Marhaus of youre gentylnes ye teche me curtosye, for hit is not for one knyzt to be on foote, and the other on horsbak, & therwith syr Marhaus sette his spere ageyne a tree and alyghte and tayed his hors to a tree, and dressid his shelde, and eyther cam vnto other egerly, and smote to gyders with her swerdes that her sheldes flewe in cantels, and they brysed their helmes and their hauberkes and wounded eyther other, but Syre gawayne fro it passed ix of the clok waxed euer stronger and stronger, for thenne hit cam to the houre of noone & thryes his myghte was encreaced. Alle this aspyed syr Marhaus and had grete wonder how his myghte encreaced, and so they wounded other passynge sore. And thenne whan it was past noone, and whan it drewe toward euensonge syre gawayns strengthe febled & waxt passynge faynte

that vnnethes he myght dure ony lenger, and syr Marhaus was thenne bygger and bygger, syre knyght said syr Marhaus, I haue wel felt that ye are a passynge good knyghte and a merueyllous man of myghte as euer I felt ony, whyle hit lasteth, And oure quarels are not grete, and therfor it were pyte to doo yow hurte, for I fele ye are passynge feble. A said syr Gawayn gentyl knyghte ye say the word that I shold say. And therwith they took of theire helmes, and eyther kyssed other, and there they swore to gyders eyther to loue other as bretheren. And syr Marhaus prayd syr gawayn to lodge with hym that nyghte. And so they toke theyr horses, and rode toward syr Marhaus hous. And as they rode by the wey, syr knyghte said syr gawayne I haue merueylle that so valyaunt a man as ye be loue no ladyes ne damoysels. Syre sayd syr marhaus they name me wrongfully tho that gyue me that name, but wel I wote it ben the damoysels of the Turret that so name me and other suche as they be. Now shalle I telle yow for what cause I hate them. For they be sorceresses and enchaunters many of them, & be a knyzt neuer so good of his body and ful of prowesse as man may be, they wille make hym a stark coward to haue the better of hym, and this is the pryncipal cause that I hate them & to al good ladyes and gentyl wymmen I owe my seruyse as a knyght ouzte to do. As the book reherceth in frensshe ther were many knyghtes that ouermatched syr gawayne for alle the thryes myghte that he had. Syr Launcelot de lake, syr Trystrams, syr Bors de ganys, syr Percyuale, syr Pellias & syr Marhaus, these sixe knyztes had the better of sir gawayn. Thenne within a lytel whyle they cam to syr Marhaus place, whiche was in a lytel pryory, and there they alyghte and ladyes and damoysels vnarmed them, and hastely loked to theyr hurtes, for they were all thre hurte, and so they had all thre good lodgynge with syr Marhaus and good chere, for whan he wyst that they were kynge Arthurs syster sones, he maade them al the chere that lay in his power, and so they soiourned there a vii nyghte, and were wel easyd of their woundes and at the last departed. Now said syre Marhaus we wylle not departe soo lyztely, for I wylle brynge you thorow the forest. And rode daye by day wel a seuen dayes or they fond ony auenture. At the last they cam in to a grete forest that

was named the countreye and foreste of Arroy and the countrey of straunge auentures. In this countrey sayd syr Marhaus cam neuer knyghte syn it was crystened, but he fonde straunge auentures, and soo they rode, and cam in to a depe valey ful of stones, and ther by they sawe a fayr streme of water, aboue ther by was the hede of the streme a fayr fontayne, & thre damoysels syttynge therby. And thenne they rode to them, and eyther salewed other, and the eldest had a garland of gold aboute her hede, and she was thre score wynter of age, or more, and her here was whyte vnder the garland. The second damoysel was of thyrrty wynter of age with a serkelet of gold aboute her hede. The thyrd damoysel was but xv yere of age, and a garland of floures aboute her hede. When these knyghtes had soo beholde them, they asked hem the cause why they sat at that fontayne, we be here sayd the damoysels for thys cause, yf we may see ony erraunt knyghtes to teche hem vnto straunge auentures, and ye be thre knyghtes that seken auentures and we be thre damoysels, and therfore eche one of yow must chese one of us. And whan ye haue done soo, we wylle lede yow vnto thre hyhe wayes, and there eche of yow shal chese a wey and his damoysel with hym. And this day twelue monethe ye must mete here ageyn, and god sende yow your lyues, and there to ye must plyzte your trouthe, this is wel said sayd syr Marhaus.

Capitulum xx.

Now shalle eueryche of vs chese a damoysel. I shalle telle yow sayd syre Uwayne I am the yongest and moost weykest of yow bothe, therfor I wyl haue the eldest damoysel, for she hath sene moche and can best helpe me whan I haue nede, for I haue moost nede of helpe of yow bothe. Now said syr Marhaus I wyll haue the damoysel of thyrtty wynter age for she falleth best to me. Wel sayd syre gawayne, I thanke yow, for ye haue lefte me the yongest and the fayrest, and she is moost leuest to me. Thenne euery damoysel took her knyght by the raynes of his brydel, and broughte him to the thre wayes, and there was their othe made to mete at the fontayne

that day twelue moneth and they were lyuynge, and soo they kyst and departed, and eueryche knyghte sette his lady behynd hym, and syr Uwayne took the wey that lay west. And syr Marhaus took the wey that lay southe, and syr gawayne took the weye that laye northe.

Now wylle we begynne at syr gawayne that helde that wey tyll that he cam vnto a fayre manoir where dwellyd an old knyghte & a good housholder, and there syr Gawayn asked the knyght yf he knewe ony auentures in that countrey. I shalle shewe yow somme to morne sayd the old knyghte, and that merueyllous. Soo on the morne they rode in to the forest of aduentures tyl they cam to a launde, and ther by they fond a crosse, and as they stode and houed, ther cam by them the fayrest knyght and the semelyest man that euer they sawe, makynge the grettest dole that euer man made. And thenne he was ware of syr gawayn and salewed hym and praid god to sende hym moche worship. As to that said syr gawayn gramercy. Also I praye to god that he send yow honour and worship. A said the knyghte I may laye that on syde, for sorowe and shame cometh to me after worship.

Capitulum xxi.

And ther with he passed vnto the one syde of the launde. And on the other syde sawe syr Gawayne x knyztes that houed styll and make hem redy with her sheldes and speres ageynst that one knyght that cam by syr gawayn. Thenne this one knyght auentryd a grete spere, and one of the x knyghtes encountred with hym, but this woful knyght smote hym so hard that he felle ouer his hors taylle. So this same dolorous knyzt serued hem al, that at the lest way he smote doune hors and man, and alle he dyd with one spere, and soo whan they were all x on fote, they wente to that one knyght, and he stode stone styll, and suffred hem to pulle hym doune of his hors, and bound hym hande and foote, and tayed hym vnder the hors bely, and so ledde hym with hem. O Jhesu sayd syr gawayne this is a dooleful syghte, to see the yonder knyghte so to be entreted, and it semeth by the knyght that he suffreth hem to bynde hym soo, for he

maketh no resystence. Noo said his hoost that is trouthe, for and he wold they al were to weyke soo to doo hym. Syr said the damoysel vnto syr Gawayn, me semeth hit were youre worship to helpe that dolorous knyghte, for me thynketh he is one of the best knyghtes that euer I sawe. I wold doo for hym sayd syre gawayn, but hit semeth he wylle haue no helpe, thenne sayd the damoysel me thynketh ye haue no luste to helpe hym. Thus as they talked they sawe a knyzte on the other syde of the launde al armed sauf the hede. And on the other syde ther cam a dwerf on horsbak all armed sauf the hede with a grete mouthe, and a shorte nose. And whan the dwerf came nyghe he said where is the lady shold mete vs here, and ther with all she came forth out of the wood. And thenne they began to stryue for the lady. For the knyghte sayd he wold haue her, & the dwerf said he wold haue her. Wylle we doo wel sayd the dwerf, yonder is a knyght at the crosse, lete vs put it bothe vpon hym, and as he demeth so shalle it be. I wylle wel said the knyght, and so they wente all thre vnto syre gawayn and told hym wherfor they strofe, well syrs said he wylle ye put the mater in my hand, ye they sayd both. Now damoysel sayd syr gawayn ye shal stande betwixe them both, and whether ye lyst better to go to, he shal haue yow. And whan she was sette bitwene them both, she left the knyghte and wente to the dwerf, and the dwerf took her and wente his waye syngynge, and the knyghte wente hys wey with grete mornyng. Thenne came ther two knyghtes all armed and cryed on hyghe Syre gawayn, knyghte of kynge Arthurs make the redy in al hast and Juste with me, soo they ranne to gyders that eyther felle doune, and thenne on foote they drewe their swerdes and dyd ful actually, the mene whyle the other knyghte wente to the damoysel, and asked her, why she abode with that knyghte, and yf ye wold abyde with me, I wylle be your feythful knyghte and with yow wylle I be said the damoysel, for with syr Gawayn I may not fynde in myn herte to be with hym. For now here was one knyzt scomfyte x knyghtes. And at the laste he was cowardly led awey, and therfore lete vs two goo whylest they fyghte, and syre Gawayn fought with that other knyght longe, but at the last they accorded both. And thenne the knyght prayd syr gawayn to lodge with hym that nyghte. Soo as syre

Gawayn wente with this knyghte he asked hym what knyghte is he in this countrey that smote doune the ten knyghtes, for whan he had done so manfully he suffred hem to bynde hym hand and foote, and soo ledde hym awey. A sayd the knyghte that is the best knyght I trowe in the world, and the moost man of prowesse, and he hath be serued soo as he was ēne more than x tymes, and his name hyghte syr Pelleas, and he loueth a grete lady in this countrey and her name is Ettard, and so when he loued her there was cryed in this countrey a greete Justes thre dayes. And alle the knyghtes of this countrey were there and gentylwymmen. And who that preued hym the best knyght shold haue a passyng good swerd and a Serklet of gold, and the serklet the knyght shold gyue hit to the fayrest lady that was at the Justes. And this knyghte syre Pelleas was the best knyghte that was there, and there were fyue honderd knyghtes, but there was neuer man that euer syre Pelleas met with al, but he stroke hym doune or els from his hors. And euery day of thre dayes he strake doune twenty knyghtes, therfore they gaf hym the pryse, & forthe with all he wente there as the lady Ettard was, and gaf her the serklet, & said openly, she was the fayrest lady that there was, & that wold he preue vpon ony knyghte that wold say nay.

Ca. xxii.

And soo he chose her for his souerayne lady, & neuer to loue other but her, but she was so proude that she had scorne of hym and sayd that she wold neuer loue hym thouz he wold dye for her, wherfor al ladyes and gentylwymmen hadde scorne of her that she was so proude, for there were fayrer than she, & there was none that was ther but & sir Pelleas wold haue proferd hem loue they wold haue loued hym for his noble prowesse, & so this knyzt promysed the lady ettard to folowe her in to this coūtrey, & neuer to leue her tyl she loued hym, & thus he is here the moost party nyghe her and lodged by a pryory, and euery weke she sendeth knyghtes to fyzte with hym. And whan he hath put hem to the wers than wylle he suffre hem wylfully to take hym prysoner by cause he wold haue a syghte

of this lady. And alweyes she doth hym grete despyte, for some tyme she maketh her knyghtes to taye hym to his hors taylle and some to bynd hym vnder the hors bely. Thus in the moost shamefullest wyse that she can thynke he is broughte to her. And alle she doth hyt for to cause hym to leue this countreye and to leue his louynge. But all this can not make hym to leue, for and he wold haue foughte on foote he myghte haue had the better of the ten knyghtes as wel on foote as on horsbak. Allas sayd syr gawayn it is grete pyte of hym. And after this nyghte I wylle seke hym to morowe in this forest to doo hym alle the helpe I can. So on the morne syr gawayne tooke his leue of his hoost syre Carados and rode in to the forest. And at the last he mette with syr Pelleas makyng grete moone oute of mesure, so eche of hem salewed other, and asked hym why he made suche sorowe. And as it is aboue reherced, syre Pelleas told syre Gawayne, but alweyes I suffre her knyghtes to fare soo with me as ye sawe yesterdaye in truste at the last to wynne her loue, for she knoweth wel alle her knyghtes shold not lyghtely wynne me, and me lyste to fyghte with them to the vttermest. Wherfore I loued her not so sore I hadde leuer dye an honderd tymes, and I myght dye soo ofte rather than I wold suffre that despyte, but I truste she wylle haue pyte vpon me at the laste, for loue causeth many a good knyght to suffre to haue his entent, but allas I am vnfortunate. And ther with he maade soo grete dole & sorowe that vnnethe he myghte holde hym on horsback. Now sayd syre gawayne leue your mornynge and I shalle promyse yow by the feythe of my body to doo alle that lyeth in my power to gete yow the loue of your lady, and ther to I wylle plyte yow my trouthe. A sayd syr Pelleas of what Courte are ye telle me I praye yow my good frend. And thenne syr gawayne sayd I am of the courte of kynge Arthur, and his susters sone, and kynge Lott of Orkeney was my fader, and my name is syre Gawayne. And thenne he sayd my name is Syre Pelleas borne in the Iles, and of many Iles I am lord, and neuer haue I loued lady nor damoysel tyl now in an vnhappy tyme, and syr knyghte syn ye are soo nyghe cosyn vnto kynge Arthur and a kynges sone, therfor bytraye me not but helpe me, for I may neuer come by her but by somme good knyghte, for she is in a stronge castel here

fast by within this four myle, and ouer all this countrey she is lady of. And so I may neuer come to her presence, but as I suffre her knyghtes to take me, and but yf I dyd so that I myghte haue a syghte of her I had ben dede long or this tyme, and yet fayre word had I neuer of her, but whā I am brought to fore her, she rebuketh me in the fowlest maner. And thenne they take my hors and harneis and putten me oute of the yates, and she wylle not suffre me to ete nor drynke, and alweyes I offre me to be her prysoner, but that she wylle not suffre me, for I wold desyre no more what paynes so euer I had, soo that I myzte haue a syghte of her dayly. Wel sayd syr gawayne, Al this shalle I amende and ye wylle do as I shal deuyse. I wylle haue your hors and your armour, and so wylle I ryde vnto her castel and telle her that I haue slayne yow, and soo shal I come withynne her to cause her to cherysshe me. And thenne shalle I doo my true parte that ye shalle not faylle to haue the loue of her.

Capitulum xxiii.

And there with syr Gawayne plyghte his trouthe vnto syr Pelleas to be true and feythful vnto hym, soo eche one plyghte their trouthe to other, and soo they chaunged horses and harneis, and sire Gawayn departed, and came to the castel where as stoode the pauelions of this lady withoute the yate. And as soone as Ettard had aspyed syr Gawayn she fledde in toward the castel, syre Gawayn spak on hyghe, and badde her abyde, for he was not syre Pelleas. I am another knyghte that haue slayne syr Pelleas, doo of youre helme said the lady Ettard that I maye see your vysage. And soo whan she sawe that it was not syr Pelleas, she made hym alyghte and ledde hym vnto her castel, and asked hym feythfully, whether he had slayne syr Pelleas, and he sayd her ye, and told her his name was syre gawayn of the courte of kynge Arthur and his syster sone. Truly sayd she that is grete pyte, for he was a passynge good knyghte of his body, but of al men on lyue I hated hym moost, for I coude neuer be quyte of hym. And for ye haue slayne hym, I shalle be your Woman and to doo ony thynge that myghte please

yow. Soo she made syr Gawayne good chere. Thenne syr gawayne sayd that he loued a lady, and by no meane she wold loue hym. She is to blame sayd Ettard and she wylle not loue yow, for ye that be soo wel borne a man and suche a man of prowesse, there is no lady in the world to good for yow. Wylle ye sayd syre Gawayne promyse me to doo alle that ye maye by the feythe of youre body to gete me the loue of my lady, Ye syre sayd she, and that I promyse yow by the feythe of my body. Now sayd syre Gawayne it is your self that I loue so wel, therfore I praye yow hold your promyse. I maye not chese sayd the lady Ettard, but yf I shold be forsworne, and soo she graunted hym to fulfylle alle his desyre.

Soo it was thenne in the moneth of May that she and syre Gawayn wente oute of the castel and souped in a pauelione, and there was made a bedde, and there syre gawayne and the lady Ettard wente to bedde to gyders, and in another pauelione she layd her damoysels, and in the thyrd pauelione she leyd parte of her knyghtes, for thenne she had no drede of syr Pelleas. And there syre gawayn lay with her in that pauelione two dayes and two nyghtes. And on the thyrd day in the mornyng erly syr Pelleas armed hym, for he hadde neuer slepte syn syr Gawayn departed from hym, for syr Gawayne had promysed hym by the feythe of hys body to come to hym vnto his pauelione by that pryory within the space of a daye and a nyghte. Thenne syre Pelleas mounted vpon horsbak, and cam to the pauelions that stode without the castel, and fonde in the fyrst pauelione thre knyghtes in thre beddes, and thre squyers lyggynge at their feet, thenne wente he to the seconde pauelione & fond four gentylwymmen lyenge in four beddes, & thenne he yede to the thyrd pauelion & fond syr gawayn lyggyng in bedde with his lady Ettard & eyther clyppyng other in armes, and whan he sawe that his herte wel nyghe brast for sorou, & said Allas that euer a knyzt shold be founde so fals, and thene he took his hors & myzt not abyde no lenger for pure sorowe. And whanne he hadde ryden nyghe half a myle he torned ageyne and thoughte to slee hem bothe. And whanne he sawe hem bothe soo lye slepynge faste, vnnethe he myght holde hym on horsbak for sorowe, and sayd thus to hym self, though this knyght be neuer soo fals I wyl neuer slee hym slepynge. For

I wylle neuer destroye the hygh ordre of knygthode, and therewith he departed ageyne.

And or he hadde ryden half a myle he retorned ageyne, and thoughte thenne to slee hem bothe, makynge the grettest sorou that euer man made. And whanne he came to the pauelions, he tayed his hors vnto a tree, and pulled oute his swerd naked in his hand, and wente to them there as they lay, and yet he thought it were shame to slee them slepynge, and layd the naked swerd ouerthwart bothe their throtes, and soo tooke his hors and rode his waye.

And whanne syre Pelleas came to his pauelions, he told his knyghtes and his squyers how he had sped, and sayd thus to them, for your true and good seruyse ye haue done me I shall gyue yow alle my goodes, for I wylle goo vnto my bedde and neuer aryse vntyl I am dede. And whan that I am dede, I charge yow that ye take the herte oute of my body and bere it her betwyxe two syluer dysshes, and telle her how I sawe her lye with the fals knyght Syr Gawayne. Ryght soo syr Pelleas vnarmed hym self and wente vnto his bedde makynge merueyllous dole and sorowe.

Thenne syre Gawayne and Ettard awoke of her slepe, & fonde the naked swerd ouerthwart theire throtes, thenne she knewe wel it was syr Pelleas swerd. Allas sayd she to sir Gawayne, ye haue bitrayed me and syr Pelleas bothe, for ye told me ye had slayne hym, and now I knowe wel it is not soo he is on lyue. And yf syre Pelleas had ben as vncurteis to yow as ye haue ben to hym ye hadde ben a dede knyghte, but ye haue deceyued me and bytrayd me falsly, that al ladyes and damoysels may beware by yow and me. And therwith syr gawayn made hym redy, and wente in to the forest. Soo it happed thenne that the damoysel of the lake Nymue mette with a knyghte of syr Pelleas that wente on his foote in the forest makyng grete dole, and she asked hym the cause. And soo the woful knyghte told her how his mayster and lorde was bitrayed thurgh a knyghte and a lady, and how he wyll neuer aryse oute of his bed tyl he be dede. Brynge me to hym sayd she anone, and I wyl waraunt his lyf he shal not dye for loue, and she that hath caused hym so to loue, she shalle be in as euyl plyte as he is or it be long to, for it is no joy of suche a prowde lady that wylle haue no mercy

of suche a valyaunt knyght, anone that knyzte broughte her vnto hym. And whan she sawe hym lye in his bedde, she thoughte she sawe neuer so lykely a knyght, and ther with she threwe an enchauntement vpon hym, and he felle on slepe. And ther whyle she rode vnto the lady Ettard, and charged no man to awake hym tyl she came ageyne. Soo within two houres she broughte the lady Ettard thydder, and both ladyes fonde hym on slepe, loo sayd the damoysel of the lake ye oughte to be ashamed for to murder suche a knyght. And therwith she threwe suche an enchauntement vpon her that she loued hym sore, that wel nyghe she was oute of her mynde. O lord Jhesu saide the lady Ettard, how is it befallen vnto me, that I loue now hym that I haue moost hated of ony man alyue, that is the ryghtwys jugement of god sayd the damoysel. And thenne anone syr Pelleas awaked and loked vpon Ettard. And whan he sawe her, he knewe her, & thēne he hated her more than ony woman alyue, and said awey traitresse come neuer in my syzt. And whan she herd hym say so, she wepte and made grete sorou oute of mesure.

Capitulum xxiiii.

Syre knyght Pelleas sayd the damoysel of the lake, take your hors, and come forthe with me oute of this countrey, and ye shal loue a lady that shal loue yow. I wylle wel said syr Pelleas, for this lady Ettard hath done me grete despyte and shame, and there he told her the begynnynge and endynge. And how he had purposed neuer to haue arysen tyll that he hadde ben dede. And now suche grace god hath sente me, that I hate her as moche as euer I loued her thanked be our lord Jhesus. Thanke me sayde the damoysel of the lake. anone syre Pellas armed hym and tooke his hors and commaunded his men to brynge after his pauelions and his stuffe where the damoysel of the lake wold assigne, soo the lady Ettard dyed for sorowe, and the damoysel of the lake reioysed syr Pellas and loued to gyders durynge their lyf dayes.

Capitulum xxv.

Now torne we vnto syr Marhaus that rode with the damoysel of xxx wynter of age southard, and soo they cam in to a depe forest, and by fortune they were nyzted, and rode longe in a depe way, and at the last they came vnto a courtelage, and there they asked herborow, but the mā of the courtelage wold not lodge them for no treatyce that they coude treate, but thus moche the good man sayd, and ye will take the aduenture of youre lodgyng, I shal brynge you there ye shalle be lodged. What auenture is that that I shal haue, for my lodgynge sayd syr Marhaus. Ye shalle wete whan ye come there sayd the good man, syr what auenture so it be bryng me thyder I pray the sayd syr Marhaus, for I am wery, my damoysel and my hors. So the good man wente and opened the gate, and within an houre he broughte hym vnto a fayre castel, and thenne the poure man called the porter, and anon he was lete in to the castel, & soo he told the lord how he brouzt hym a knyght erraunt and a damoysel that wold be lodged with hym, lete hym in said the lord, it may happen he shalle repente that they toke their lodgyng here. So syr Marhaus was lete in with torche lyghte, and there was a goodely syghte of yonge men that welcomed hym. And thenne his hors was ledde in to the stable, and he and the damoysel were broughte in to the halle, and there stode a myghty duke and many goodely men about hym, thēne this lord asked hym what he hyghte, and fro whens he cam, and with whome he dwelt, syre he said I am a knyghte of kynge Arthurs and knyght of the table round, and my name is syre Marhaus, and borne I am in Irland. And thenne sayd the duke to hym, that me sore repenteth, the cause is this, for I loue not thy lord, nor none of thy felawes of the table round. And therfor ease thy self this nyghte as wel as thow mayst, for as to morne I & my sixe sonnes shal matche with yow. Is ther no remedy but that I must haue adoo with yow and your vi sones at ones sayd syr Marhaus. No sayd the duke for this cause I maade myn auowe, for syr gawayne slewe my seuen sonnes in a recounter, therfore I made myn auowe, there shold neuer knyzt of kynge Arthurs court lodge with

me or come there as I myght haue adoo with hym, but that I wold haue a reuengyng of my sonnes dethe. What is your name said syr Marhaus I requyre yow telle me and it please yow. Wete thow wel I am the duke of south marchys. A sayd sir Marhaus I haue herd saye that ye haue ben longe tyme a grete foo vnto my lord arthur and to his knyghtes, that shalle ye fele to morne said the duke. Shalle I haue adoo with yow sayd syr Marhaus, ye sayd the duke, therof shalt thow not chese, and therfore take yow to your chambre and ye shalle haue all that to yow longeth. So syr Marhaus departed and was led to a chamber, and his damoysel was led vnto her chamber. And on the morn the duke sente vnto syre Marhaus and bad make hym redy. And so syr Marhaus arose and armed hym, and thenne ther was a masse songe afore hym and brake his fast, and so moũted on horsbak in the courte of the castel there they shold doo the batail. So ther was the duke al redy on horsbak clene armed and his syxe sonnes by hym, and eueryche had a spere in his hand, and soo they encountred where as the duke and his two sones brak theyr speres vpon hym, but sir Marhaus helde vp his spere and touched none of them.

Capitulum xxvi.

THENNE cam the foure sones by couple, and two of them brake their speres, and soo dyd the other two. And alle this whyle syre marhaus touched hem not. Thenne sir marhaus ranne to the duke, and smote hym with his spere that hors and man felle to the erthe. And so he serued his sones. And thenne syr Marhaus alyghte doune and bad the duke yelde hym or els he wold slee hym. And thenne some of his sones recouerd, and wold haue set vpon syr Marhaus. Thenne syr Marhaus sayd to the duke seace thy sones or els I will doo the vttermest to yow all. Thenne the duke sawe he myghte not escape the deth, he cryed to his sones and charged them to yelde them to syr Marhaus. And they kneled al doune, and put the pomels of theire swerdes to the knyght, and soo he receyued them. And thenne they halp vp their fader, and soo by their comynal as-

sente promysed to syr Marhaus neuer to be foes vnto kynge Arthur, and therupon at Whytsontyde after to come he and his sones and putte them in the kynges grace. Thenne syr Marhaus departed and within two dayes his damoysel brought hym where as was a grete tornement that the lady de Vawse had cryed. And who that dyd best shold haue a ryche serklet of gold worthe a thousand besauntes. And there syr Marhaus dyd so nobly that he was renomed, & had somtyme doune fourty knyghtes, and soo the serklet of gold was rewarded hym. Thenne he departed fro thens with grete worship. And soo within seuen nyghtes his damoysel brought hym to an erles place, his name was the erle Fergus, that after was syre Tristrams knyghte, and this Erle was but a yonge man, and late come in to his landes, and there was a gyant fast by hym that hyzte Taulurd, and he had another broder in Cornewaille that hyghte Taulas that syr Trystram slewe whanne he was oute of hys mynde. So this Erle maade his complaynte vnto syre Marhaus that there was a gyaunt by hym that destroyed al his londes, & how he durst nowhere ryde nor goo for hym. Syr sayd the knyghte whether vseth he to fyghte on horsbak or on foote, nay sayd the erle there maye no hors bere hym. Wel said syr marhaus thenne wille I fyghte with hym on foote. Soo on the morne syr Marhaus prayd the erle that one of his men myghte brynge hym where as the gyaũt was, and so he was, for he sawe hym sytte vnder a tree of hooly, and many clubbes of yron and gysarms about hym. Soo thys knyghte dressid hym to the gyant puttyng his sheld afore hym, and the gyant toke an Iron clubbe in his hande, & at the fyrste stroke he clafe syre Marhaus shelde in ii pyeces. And there he was in grete peryl, for the gyant was a wyly fyghter, but atte last syr Marhaus smote of his ryght arme aboue the elbowe, thẽe the gyant fledde and the knyght after hym, and soo he drofe hym in to a water, but the gyant was soo hyghe that he myghte not wade after hym. And thenne sir Marhaus made the erle Fergus man to fetche hym stones, & with tho stones the knyghte gaf the gyaunt many sore knockes, tyl at the last he made hym falle doune in to the water, & so was he there dede, thẽe syr Marhaus wẽte vnto the gyants castel, and there he delyuerd xxiiii ladyes and twelue knyztes oute of the gyants pryson, and there he had grete rychesse withoute nombre,

soo that the dayes of his lyf he was neuer poure man. thenne he retorned to the erle Fergus, the whiche thanked hym gretely, and wold haue gyuen hym half his lādes but he wold none take. Soo syr Marhaus dwellyd with the erle nyghe half a yere, for he was sore brysed with the gyaunt, and at the laste he took his leue. And as he rode by the way, he mette with syr gawayne and syr Uwayne, and so by aduenture he mette with foure knyghtes of Arthurs courte, the fyrst was syr Sagramore desyrus, syr Ozanna, syr Dodynas le saueage, and syre felot of lystynoyse, and there syr Marhaus with one spere smote doune these foure knyghtes, and hurte them sore. Soo he departed to mete at his day afore sette.

Capitulum xxvii.

Now tourne we vnto syr Uwayne that rode westwarde with his damoysel of thre score wynter of age, and she broughte hym there as was a turnement nyghe the marche of Walys, and at that tornement syre Uwayne smote doune xxx knyghtes, therfore was gyuen hym the pryse, and that was a gerfaukon, and a whyte stede trapped with clothe of gold. Soo thenne syr Uwayne dyd many straunge auentures by the meanes of the old damoysel, and so she broughte hym to a lady that was called the lady of the roche, the which was moche curtois. So there were in the countrey two knyztes that were bretheren, and they were called two peryllous knyghtes, the one knyghte hyght syre Edward of the reed castel, & the other syr Hue of the reed castel. And these two bretheren had disheryted the lady of the roche of a Baronry of landes by their extorsion. And as this knyzt was lodged with this lady she made her compleynt to hym of these two knyghtes. Madame sayd syr Uwayne, they are to blame, for they doo ageynst the hyghe ordre of knygthode & the othe that they made. And yf hit lyke yow I wille speke with hem by cause I am a knyghte of kynge Arthurs, and I wylle entrete them with fayrenesse. And yf they wylle not I shalle doo bataille with them and in the deffense of youre ryghte. gramercy sayd the lady, and there as I maye not acquyte yow, god shalle. Soo on the morne the two

knyghtes were sente for, that they shold come thyder to speke with the lady of the roche, and wete ye wel they fayled not, for they cam with an C hors. But whan this lady sawe them in this maner soo bygge, she wold not suffre syr Uwayne to goo oute to them vpon no surete ne for no fayr langage, but she made hym speke with them ouer a toure, but fynally these two bretheren wold not be entreated, and ansuerd that they wold kepe that they had. Wel said syr Uwayne, thenne wylle I fyghte with one of yow, and preue that ye doo this lady wronge, that wille we not said they, For and we doo bataille we two wyl fyghte with one knyzt at ones, and therfore yf ye wille fyghte soo we wille be redy at what houre ye wille assigne. And yf ye wynne vs in bataille the lady shal haue her landes ageyne, ye say wel sayd sir Uwayne, therfor make yow redy so that ye be here to morne in the defence of the ladyes ryght.

Capitulum xxviii.

So was there sykernesse made on both partyes that no treason shold be wrought on neyther partye, soo thenne the knyghtes departed and made hem redy, and that nyghte syr Uwayn had grete chere. And on the morne he arose erly and herd masse and brake his fast, and soo he rode vnto the playn withoute the gates where houed the two bretheren abydynge hym. Soo they rode to gyders passynge sore that syre Edward and syr Hue brake their speres vpon syr Uwayne. And syr Uwayne smote syre Edward that he felle ouer his hors and yet his spere brast not. And thenne he spored his hors and came vpon syr Hue and ouerthrewe hym, but they soone recouerd and dressid their sheldes and drewe their suerdes and bad syre Uwayne alyghte and doo his bataill to the vttermest. Thenne syr Uwayn deuoyded his hors sodenly, & put his shelde afore hym and drewe his swerde, and soo they dressyd to gyders, and eyther gaf other suche strokes, & there these two bretheren wounded syr Uwayne passyng greuously that the lady of the roche wende he shold haue dyed. And thus they fought to gyders fyue houres as men raged oute of reason. And at the laste syr Uwayne smote syr Ed-

ward vpon the helme suche a stroke that his swerd kerued vnto his canel bone, and thenne syr Hue abated his courage, but syr Uwayn pressed fast to haue slayne hym. That sawe syr Hue he kneled doune and yelde hym to syr Uwayne, and he of his gentilnesse receyued his swerd and took hym by the hand & went in to the castel to gyders. Thenne the lady of the roche was passyng glad and the other broder made grete sorowe for his broders dethe, thenne the lady was restored of al her landes, and syr Hue was commaunded to be at the Courte of kynge Arthur at the next feest of penthecost. So sir Uwayn dwelt with the lady nyghe half a yere, for it was longe or he myghte be hole of his grete hurtes, and soo whan it drewe nygh the terme day that syr gawayn, syr Marhaus and syre Uwayne shold mete at the crosse way, thenne euery knyght drewe hym thyder to holde his promyse that they had made, & syr Marhaus and syr Uwayne broughte their damoysels with them, but sir Gawayn had lost his damoysel as it is afore reherced.

Capitulum xxix.

Ryght soo at the twelue monethes ende they mette alle thre knyghtes at the fontayne and their damoisels, but the damoysel that syr gawayn had coude saye but lytel worship of hym, soo they departed from the damoysels and roode thurgh a grete forest, and there they mette with a messager that cam fro kynge Arthur that had soughte them wel nyhe a xii moneth thorou oute al Englond, Walys and Scotland, and charged yf euer he myght fynde syre Gawayn and syre Uwayn to brynge hem to the courte ageyne. And thenne were they al gladde, and soo prayd they syre Marhaus to ryde with hem to the kynges courte. And soo within twelue dayes they cam to Camelot, and the kynge was passyng glad of their comynge and soo was alle the Courte. Thenne the kyng made hem to swere vpon a book to telle hym alle theire aduentures that had befalle hem that twelue monethe and soo they dyd. And there was sir Marhaus wel knowen, for ther were knyghtes that he had matched afore tyme, and he was named one of the best knyghtes lyuyng. Ageyne the feest of pen-

tecost cam the damoysel of the lake and broughte with hir syr Pelleas, and at that hyhe feest there was grete Justynge of knyghtes, and of al knyghtes that were at that Justes, syr Pelleas had the pryse, and syr Marhaus was named the next, but syr Pelleas was soo stronge, there myght but fewe knyghtes sytte hym a buffet with a spere. And at that next feest sir pelleas and syr marhaus were made knyghtes of the table roūd. For there were two seges voyde, for two knyghtes were slayn that twelue moneth, and grete ioye had kynge Arthur of sire Pelleas and of sire Marhaus, but Pelleas loued neuer after sire Gawayne, but as he spared hym for the loue of kyng arthur. But oftymes at justes and turnementes sire Pelleas quyte sire Gawayn, for so it reherceth in the book of Frensshe. Soo sire Trystram many dayes after faughte with sire Marhaus in an yland, and there they dyd a grete bataylle, but at the last sire Trystram slewe hym, soo sire Trystram was woūded that vnnethe he myght recouer and lay at a nonnery halfe a yere, and sire Pelleas was a worshipful knyghte, & was one of the four that encheued the sancgreal, and the damoysel of the lake made by her meanes that neuer he had adoo with sire launcelot de lake, for where sire launcelot was at ony Justes or ony tornement, she wold not suffre hym be there that daye, but yf it were on the syde of syr launcelot.

Explicit Liber quartus.

Incipit liber quintus.

HANNE kyng Arthur had after longe werre rested, and helde a Ryal feeste and table rounde with his alyes of kynges, prynces, and noble knyghtes all of the round table, there cam in to his halle he syttynge in his throne Ryal, xii aũcyen men, berynge eche of them a braunche of Olyue in token that they cam as Embassatours and messagers fro the Emperour Lucyus, whiche was called at that tyme, Dictatour or procurour of the publyke wele of Rome, whiche sayde messagers after their entryng & comyng in to the presence of kynge Arthur dyd to hym theyr obeyssaũce in makyng to hym reuerence said to hym in this wyse. The hyghe & myghty Emperour Lucyus sendeth to the kyng of Bretayne gretyng, cõmaũdyng the to knouleche hym for thy lord, and to sende hym the truage due of this Royamme vnto thempyre, whiche thy fader and other to fore thy precessours haue paid as is of record. And thou as rebelle not knowynge hym as thy souerayne withholdest and reteynest contrary to the statutes and decrees maade by the noble and worthy Julius Cezar

conquerour of this Royame, and fyrst Emperour of Rome. And yf thou refuse his demaunde and commaundement, knowe thou for certayne that he shal make stronge werre ageynst the, thy Royames & londes, and shall chastyse the and thy subgettys, that it shal be ensample perpetuel vntō alle kynges and prynces, for to denye their truage vnto that noble empyre whiche domyneth vpon the vnyuersal world. Thenne whan they had shewed theffecte of their message, the kyng commaunded them to withdrawe them. And said he shold take auyce of counceylle and gyue to them an ansuere. Thenne somme of the yonge knyghtes heryng this their message wold haue ronne on them to haue slayne them, sayenge, that it was a rebuke to alle the knyghtes there beyng present to suffre them to saye so to the kynge. And anone the kynge commaunded that none of them vpon payne of dethe to myssaye them ne doo them ony harme, and commaūded a knyghte to brynge them to their lodgynge, and see that they haue alle that is necessary and requysyte for them, with the best chere, and that noo deyntee be spared. For the Romayns ben grete lordes, and though theyr message please me not ne my court yet I must remembre myn honour. After this the kyng lete calle alle his lordes and knyghtes of the round table to counceyl vpon this mater, and desyred them to saye theire aduys. thenne syr Cador of Cornewaile spacke fyrste and sayd. Syre this message lyketh me wel, for we haue many dayes rested vs and haue ben ydle, and now I hope ye shalle make sharp warre on the Romayns where I doubte not we shal gete honour. I byleue wel sayd Arthur that this mater pleaseth the wel, but these ansuers may not be ansuerd, for the demaunde greueth me sore. For truly I wyl neuer paye truage to Rome, wherfore I pray yow to counceylle me. I haue vnderstande that Bellinus and Brenius kynges of Bretayne haue had thempyre in their handes many dayes. And also Constantyn the sone of Heleyne, whiche is an open euydence that we owe noo trybute to Rome, but of ryght we that ben descended of them haue ryght to clayme the tytle of thempyre.

Capitulum Secundum.

THENNE ānsuerd kynge Anguysshe of Scotland, Syr ye oughte of ryght to be aboue al other kynges, for vnto yow is none lyke ne pareylle in Crystendome, of knyzthode ne of dygnyte, & I counceylle you neuer to obeye the Romayns, for whan they regned on vs, they destressyd oure elders, and putte this land to grete extorcions & taylles, wherfore I make here myn auowe to auenge me on them, and for to strengthe youre quarel I shal furnysshe xx M good men of warre and wage them on my costes, whiche shal awayte on yow with my self whan it shal please yow. And the kyng of lytel Bretayne graunted hym to the same xxx M, wherfor kynge Arthur thanked them. And thenne euery man agreed to make warre, and to ayde after their power, that is to wete the lord of Westwalis promysed to brynge xxx M men. And syr Uwayne, syre Ider his sone with their cosyns promysed to brynge xxx thousand. thenne syre launcelot with alle other promysed in lyke wyse euery men a grete multytude. And whan kynge Arthur vnderstood theire courages and good wylles, he thanked them hertely, and after lete calle thembassatours to here theire ansuere. And in presence of alle his lordes and knyghtes he sayd to them in thys wyse. I wylle that ye retorne vnto your lord and procurour of the comyn wele for the Romayns, and saye ye to hym, Of his demaunde and commaundement I sette nothyng. And that I knowe of no truage ne trybute that I owe to hym, ne to none erthely prynce, Crysten ne hethen, but I pretende to haue and occupye the soueraynte of thempyre, wherin I am entytled by the ryght of my predecessours somtyme kynges of this lond, and saye to hym that I am delybered and fully concluded to goo wyth myn armye with strengthe and power vnto Rome by the grace of god to take possession in thempyre, and subdue them that ben rebelle, wherfore I commaunde hym and alle them of Rome that incontynent they make to me their homage & to knouleche me for their Emperour and gouernour vpon payne that shalle ensiewe. And thenne he commaunded his tresorer to gyue to them grete and large yeftes, and to paye alle theyr dispencys, and assygned syre Cador to conueye them

oute of the land, and soo they took theire leue and departed, and tooke theyr shyppynge at Sandwyche, and passed forthe by flaundrys, Almayn, the montayns, and all ytalye vntyl they cam vnto Lucius. And after the reuerence made, they made relacyon of their ansuer lyke as ye to fore haue herd. Whan themperour Lucyus had wel vnderstonde theyre credence, he was sore meued as he had ben al araged, & sayd, I had supposed that Arthur wold haue obeyed to my commaundement, and haue serued yow (me) hym self, as hym wel bysemed or ony other kyng to doo. O syre sayd one of the senatours late be suche vayn wordes, for we late yow wete that I and my felawes were ful sore aferd to beholde his countenaunce, I fere me ye haue made a rodde for your self, for he entendeth to be lord of this empyre, whiche sore is to be doubted yf he come, for he is al another mā than ye wene, and holdeth the most noble courte of the world alle other kynges ne prynces maye not compare vnto his noble mayntene. On newe yeres daye we sawe hym in his estate whiche was the ryallest that euer we sawe, for he was serued at his table with ix kynges, and the noblest felauship of other prynces, lordes, and knyghtes that ben in the world, and euery knyghte approued and lyke a lord and holdeth table roūd. And in his persone the moost manly man that lyueth, and is lyke to conquere alle the world, for vnto his courage it is to lytel, wherfore I aduyse yow to kepe wel youre marches and straytes in the montayns. For certaynly he is a lord to be doubted. Wel sayd Lucius bifore Eester I suppose to passe the moūtayns and soo forth in to fraunce, and there byreue hym his londes with Janeweyes and other myghty warryours of Tuskane and lombardye. And I shall sende for them all that ben subgettys and alyed to thēpyre of Rome to come to myn ayde, and forthwith sente old wyse knyghtes vnto these countrayes folowynge, fyrste to ambage and arrage, to Alysaundrye, to ynde, to hermonye, where as the ryuer of Eufrates renneth in to Asye, to Auffryke, and Europe the large, to ertayne and Elamye, to Arabye, Egypte and to damaske, to damyete and Cayer, to Capadoce, to tarce, Turkye, pounce and pampoylle, to Surrye and gallacye. And alle these were subgette to Rome and many moo, as Grece, Cypres, Macydone, Calabre, Cateland, portyngale with many thousandes of spaynardys,

Thus alle these kynges, dukes, and admyrals assembled aboute Rome with xvi kynges attones with grete multytude of peple. Whan themperour vnderstood their comyng, he made redy his Romayns, and alle the peple bytwene hym & Flaundres. Also he hadde goten wyth hym fyfty Geauntes whiche had ben engendred of fendys. And they were ordeyned to garde his persone, and to breke the frounte of the bataylle of kynge Arthur.

And thus departed fro Rome and came doune the montayns for to destroye the londes that Arthur had conquerd and cam vnto Coleyne, and byseged a Castel there by, and wanne it soone and stuffed hit with two honderd sarasyns or Infydeles, and after destroyed many fayr countrees, whiche Arthur had wonne of kyng Claudas. And thus Lucius cam with alle his hoost whiche were disperplyd lx myle in brede, and commaunded them to mete with hym in Burgoyne, for he purposed to destroye the Royame of lytyl Bretayne.

Capitulo tercio.

Now leue we of Lucius the emperour and speke we of kynge Arthur, that commaunded alle them of his retenue to be redy atte vtas of hyllary for to holde a parlement at yorke. And at that parlement was concluded to areste alle the nauye of the lond and to be redy within xv dayes at sandwyche, and there he shewed to his armye how he purposed to conquere thempyre whiche he ought to haue of ryght. And there he ordeyned two gouernours of this Royame that is to say Syre Bawdewyn of Bretayne for to counceille to the best and syr Constantyn sone to syre Cador of Cornewaylle, whiche after the dethe of Arthur was kyng of this Royamme. And in the presence of alle his lordes he resyned the rule of the royame and Gweneuer his quene to them, wherfore syre launcelot was wrothe, for he lefte syre Trystram with kynge marke for the loue of beale Isoulde. Thenne the quene Gweneuer made grete sorowe for the departynge of her lord and other, and swouned in suche wyse that the ladyes bare her in to her chambre. Thus the kyng with his grete armye departed leuyng the quene and Royamme in the gouernaunce

of syre Bawduyn and Constantyn. And whan he was on his hors, he sayd with an hyhe voys yf I dye in this iourney I wyl that syre Constantyn by myn heyer and kyng crowned of this royame as next of my blood. And after departed and entred in to the see atte Sandwyche with alle his armye with a greete multitude of shyppes, galeyes, Cogges, and dromoundes, sayllynge on the see.

Capitulum iiii.

And as the kyng laye in his caban in the shyp, he fyll in a slomerynge and dremed a merueyllous dreme, hym semed that a dredeful dragon dyd drowne moche of his peple, and he cam fleynge oute of the west, and his hede was enameled with asure, and his sholders shone as gold, his bely lyke maylles of a merueyllous hewe, his taylle ful of tatters, his feet ful of fyne sable, & his clawes lyke fyne gold. And an hydous flamme of fyre flewe oute of his mouthe, lyke as the londe and water had flammed all of fyre. After hym semed there came oute of thoryent, a grymly bore al blak in a clowde, and his pawes as bygge as a post, he was rugged lokynge roughly, he was the foulest beest that euer man sawe, he rored and romed soo hydously that it were merueill to here. Thenne the dredeful dragon auaunced hym and cam in the wynde lyke a fawcon gyuynge grete strokes on the bore, and the bore hytte hym ageyne with his grysly tuskes, that his brest was al blody, and that the hote blood made alle the see reed of his blood.

Thenne the dragon flewe awey al on an heyzte, and came doune with suche a swough and smote the bore on the rydge whiche was x foote large fro the hede to the taylle, and smote the bore all to powdre bothe flesshe and bonys, that it flytteryd al abrode on the see. And therwith the kynge awoke anone, and was sore abasshed of this dreme. And sente anone for a wyse philosopher, commaundynge to telle hym the sygnyfycacion of his dreme. Syre sayd the philosopher, the dragon that thow dremedest of, betokeneth thyn owne persone that sayllest here, & the colours of his wynges ben thy Royames that thow haste wonne, And his taylle whiche is al to tatterd

sygnefyeth the noble knyghtes of the round table. And the bore that the dragon slough comyng fro the clowdes, betokeneth some tyraunt that tormenteth the peple, or els thow arte lyke to fyghte with somme Geaunt thy self, beynge horryble and abhomynable whoos pere ye sawe neuer in your dayes, wherfore of this dredeful dreme doubte the no thynge, but as a Conquerour come forth thy self. Thenne after this soone they had syghte of londe and saylled tyl they arryued atte Barflete in Flaundres, and whanne they were there he fond many of his grete lordes redy, as they had ben commaunded to awayte vpon hym.

Capitulum v.

THENNE came to hym an husbond man of the countrey, and told hym how there was in the countre of Constantyn besyde Bretayne a grete gyaunt whiche hadde slayne murthered and deuoured moche peple of the countreye and had ben susteyned seuen yere with the children of the comyns of that land, in soo moche that alle the children ben alle slayne and destroyed, and now late he hath taken the duchesse of Bretayne as she rode with her meyne, and hath ledde her to his lodgynge whiche is in a montayne for to rauysshe and lye by her to her lyues ende, and many people folowed her moo than v C, but alle they myghte not rescowe her, but they lefte her shrykyng and cryenge lamentably, wherfore I suppose that he hath slayn her in fulfyllynge his fowle lust of lechery. She was wyf vnto thy Cosyn syre Howel, whome we calle ful nyhe of thy blood. Now as thow a ryghtful kynge haue pyte on this lady, and reuenge vs al as thow arte a noble conquerour. Alas sayd kynge Arthur, this is a grete meschyef, I had leuer than the best Royame that I haue, that I hadde ben a forlonge way to fore hym for to haue rescowed that lady. Now felawe sayd kynge Arthur canst thou brynge me there as thys gyaunt haunteth, ye syre sayd the good man, loo yonder where as thow seest tho two grete fyres, there shalt thou fynde hym, and more tresour than I suppose is in al Fraunce. Whanne the kynge hadde vnderstanden this pyteous caas, he retorned in to his tente.

Thenne he callyd to hym syre kaye and syre Bedewere, & commaunded them secretely to make redy hors and harneis for hym self and them tweyne. For after euensonge he wold ryde on pylgremage with them two only vnto saynt Mychels mounte. And thenne anone he maad hym redy, and armed hym at alle poyntes, and tooke his hors and his sheld. And soo they thre departed thens and rode forthe as faste as euer they myzt tyl that they cam to the forbond of that mount. And there they alyghted, and the kynge commaunded them to tarye there, for he wold hym self goo vp in to that mounte. And soo he ascended vp in to that hylle tyl he came to a grete fyre, and there he fonde a careful wydowe wryngynge her handes and makyng grete sorowe syttynge by a graue newe made. And thenne kynge Arthur salewed her, and demaunded of her wherfore she made suche lamentacion, to whome she ansuerd and sayd, Syre knyghte speke softe, for yonder is a deuyll yf he here the speke, he wylle come and destroye the. I hold the vnhappy what dost thow here in this mountayne. For yf ye were suche fyfty as ye be, ye were not able to make resystence ageynst this deuyl, here lyeth a duchesse deede the whiche was the fayrest of alle the world wyf to syre Howel, duc of Bretayne, he hath murthred her in forcynge her, and hath slytte her vnto the nauyl. Dame sayd the kynge, I come fro the noble Conqueroure kynge Arthur for to treate with that tyraunt for his lyege peple. Fy on suche treatys sayd she, he setteth not by the kynge ne by no man els. But and yf thou haue broughte Arthurs wyf dame Gueneuer, he shalle be gladder than thow haddest gyuen to hym half fraunce. Beware approche hym not to nygh, for he hath vaynquysshed xv kynges, and hath maade hym a cote ful of precious stones enbrowdred with theyre berdes, whiche they sente hym to haue his loue for sauacion of theyr peple at this laste Crystemasse. And yf thow wylt, speke with hym at yonder grete fyre at souper. Wel sayd Arthur I wyll accomplysshe my message for al your ferdful wordes, and wente forth by the creast of that hylle, and sawe where he satte atte souper gnawynge on a lymme of a man, bekynge his brode lymmes by the fyre and brecheles, and thre fayr damoysels tornynge thre broches wheron were broched twelue yonge children late borne lyke yonge byrdes. Whanne kynge Arthur beheld that

pyteous syzte, he had grete compassion on them so that his hert bledde for sorowe, and hayled hym sayeng in this wyse, he that alle the world weldeth gyue the shorte lyf & shameful dethe. And the deuyl haue thy soule, why hast thow murthred these yonge Innocent children, and murthred this duchesse. Therfore aryse and dresse the thow gloton. For this day shalt thou dye of my hand. Thenne the gloton anone starte vp and tooke a grete clubbe in his hand, and smote at the kynge that his coronal fylle to the erthe, and the kynge hytte hym ageyn that he carf his bely and cutte of his genytours, that his guttes & his entraylles fylle doune to the ground. Thenne the gyaunt threwe awey his clubbe, and caught the kynge in his armes that he crusshyd his rybbes. Thenne the thre maydens knelyd doune and callyd to Cryst for helpe and comforte of Arthur. And thenne Arthur weltred and wrong, that he was other whyle vnder and another tyme aboue. And so weltryng and walowynge they rolled doune the hylle, tyl they came to the see marke, and euer as they soo weltred, Arthur smote hym with his daggar, and it fortuned they came to the place, where as the two knyghtes were and kepte Arthurs hors. thenne when they sawe the kynge fast in the gyaunts armes, they came and losed hym. And thenne the kynge commaunded syr kaye to smyte of the gyaunts hede, and to sette it vpon a truncheon of a spere, and bere it to syre howel, and telle hym that his enemy was slayne, and after late this hede be bounden to a barbycan that alle the peple may see and behold hit, and go ye two vp to the montayn, and fetche me my sheld, my suerd and the clubbe of yron. And as for the tresour take ye it, for ye shalle fynde there good oute of nombre. So I haue the kertyl and the clubbe I desyre no more. This was the fyerst gyaunt that euer I mette with, sauf one in the mount of Arabe, whiche I ouercame, but this was gretter and fyerser. Thenne the knyghtes fette the clubbe and the kyrtyl, and some of the tresour they took to them self, and retorned ageyne to the host. And anone this was knowen thurgh alle the countrey, wherfor the peple came and thanked the kynge. And he sayd ageyne yeue the thanke to god, and departe the goodes amonge yow. And after that kynge Arthur sayd and commaunded his Cosyn howel that he shold ordeyne for a chirche to be bylded on the same hylle in the

worship of saynte Mychel. And on the morne the kynge remeuyd with his grete batayllle, and came in to Champayne and in a valeye, and there they pyght their tentys, and the kynge beynge set at his dyner, ther cam in two messagers, of whome that one was Marchal of fraũce and sayd to the kyng that themperour was entryd in to fraunce, and had destroyed a grete parte and was in Burgoyn, and had destroyed and made grete slaughter of peple & brente townes and borowes, wherfor yf thou come not hastely, they must yelde vp their bodyes and goodes.

Capitulum sextum.

THENNE the kynge dyd doo calle syre Gawayne, syre Borce, syr Lyonel and syre Bedewere, and commaunded them to goo strayte to syre Lucius, and saye ye to hym that hastely he remeue oute of my land. And yf he wil not, bydde hym make hym redy to batayllē and not distresse the poure peple. Thenne anone these noble knyghtes dressyd them to horsbak. And whanne they came to the grene wood, they sawe many pauelions sette in a medowe of sylke of dyuerse colours besyde a ryuer. And themperours pauelione was in the myddle with an egle displayed aboue. To the whiche tente our knyghtes rode toward, and ordeyned syr Gawayn and syre Bors to doo the message, And lefte in a busshement syre Lyonel, and syre Bedwere. And thenne syre Gawayn and syr Borce dyd their message, and commaunded Lucius in Arthurs name to auoyde his lond, or shortly to adresse hym to batayllle. To whome Lucius ansuerde and sayd ye shalle retorne to your lord and saye ye to hym that I shall subdue hym and alle his londes. Thenne syre Gawayn was wrothe and sayde I hadde leuer than alle Fraunce fyghte ageynste the, and soo hadde I saide syr Borce leuer than alle Bretayne or burgoyne. Thenne a knyght named syre Gaynus nyghe cosyn to the Emperour sayde, loo how these Bretons ben ful of pryde and boost, and they bragge as though they bare vp alle the worlde. Thenne syre Gawayne was sore greued with these wordes, and pulled oute his swerd and smote of his hede. And therwith torned theyr horses and rode

oüer waters and thurgh woodes tyl they came to theyre busshement, where as syr Lyonel and syr Bedeuer were houyng. The romayns folowed fast after on horsbak and on foote ouer a chāpayn vnto a wood, thenne syre Boors torned his hors, and sawe a knyghte come fast on, whome he smote thurgh the body with a spere that he fylle dede doune to the erthe, thenne cam Callyburne one of the strengest of pauye and smote doun many of Arthurs knyghtes. And whan syr Bors sawe hym do soo moche harme he adressyd toward hym & smote hym thurz the brest that he fylle doune dede to the erthe. Thenne syr Feldenak thought to reuenge the dethe of gaynus vpon syre Gawayn, but syre gawayn was ware therof and smote hym on the hede, whiche stroke stynted not tyl it came to his breste. And thenne he retorned and came to his felawes in the busshement. And there was a recountre, for the busshement brake on the Romayns, and slewe and hewe doune the Romayns and forced the Romayns to flee and retorne, whome the noble knyghtes chaced vnto theyr tentes. Thenne the Romayns gadred more peple, and also foote men cam on, and ther was a newe bataille and soo moche peple that syr Bors and syr Berel were taken, but whan syre gawayn sawe that, he tooke with hym syre Idrus the good knyght and sayd he wold neuer see kynge Arthur but yf he rescued them, and pulled out galatyn his good swerd, and folowed them that ledde tho ii knyghtes awaye, and he smote hym that lad syre Bors, and took syr Bors fro hym and delyuerd hym to his felawes And syre Idrus in lyke wyse rescowed syr Berel. Thenne beganne the bataill to be grete that oure knyztes were in grete jeopardy, wherfore syre Gawayn sente to kyng Arthur for socour and that he hye hym for I am sore wounded, and that oure prysoners may paye good oute of nombre. And the messager came to the kyng and told hym his message. And anon the kynge dyd doo assemble his armye, but anone or he departed the prysoners were comen, and syre gawayn and his felawes gate the felde and put the Romayns to flyght, and after retorned and came with their felauship in suche wyse, that no man of worship was loste of them, sauf that syr Gawayn was sore hurte. Thenne the kynge dyd do ransake his woundes and comforted hym. And thus was the begynnynge of the fyrst iourney of the brytons and Romayns, and ther were slayne

of the Romayns moo than ten thousand, and grete ioye and myrthe was made that nyghte in the hoost of kynge Arthur. And on the morne he sente alle the prysoners in to parys vnder the garde of syre launcelot with many knyghtes & of syr Cador.

Capitulum vii.

Now torne we to the Emperour of Rome whiche aspyed that these prysōners shold be sente to Parys, and anone he sente to leye in a busshement certayne knyghtes and prynces with syxty thousand men for to rescowe his knyghtes and lordes that were prysoners. And so on the morne as Launcelot and syre Cador chyuetayns and gouernours of all them that conueyed the prysoners as they sholde passe thurgh a wode, syr Laūcelot sente certayne knyghtes tespye yf ony were in the woodes to lette them. And whanne the said knyghtes cam in to the wood, anone they aspyed and sawe the grete enbusshement, and retorned and told syr Laūcelot that ther lay in a wayte for them thre score thousand Romayns. And thenne syr Launcelot with suche knyghtes as he hadde and men of warre to the nombre of x M put them in araye and met wyth them and foughte with them manly, and slewe and dretenchid many of the Romayns, and slewe many knyghtes & admyrals of the party of the Romayns and sarasyns, ther was slayne the kynge of lylye and thre grete lordes Aladuke, herawde, and heryngdale, but syr Launcelot fought soo nobly that no man myght endure a stroke of his hande, but where he came he shewed his prowesse and myght, for he slewe doune ryght on euery syde. And the Romayns and sarasyns fledde from hym as the sheep fro the wulf or fro the lyon, and putt them alle that abode alyue to flyght. And so longe they fouzte that tydynges came to kynge Arthur. And anone he graythed hym and came to the bataille, and sawe his knyghtes how they had vaynquysshed the bataylle, he enbraced them knyght by knyzte in his armes and said ye be worthy to welde all your honour and worship, there was neuer kynge sauf my self that had so noble knyghtes. Syre sayd Cador there was none of vs failled other, but of the prowesse and manhode of syre

Launcelot were more than wonder to telle, and also of his cosyns whiche dyd that daye many noble feates of werre. And also syre Cador tolde who of his knyghtes were slayne, as syr beriel & other syr Morys and syr Maurel two good knyghtes, thenne the kynge wepte and dryed his eyen with a keuerchyef, & sayd your courage had nere hand destroyed yow. For though ye had retorned ageyne, ye had lost no worship. For I calle hit foly, knyghtes to abyde whan they be ouermatched. Nay sayd Launcelot and the other. For ones shamed maye neuer be recouerd.

Capitulum viii.

Now leue we kynge Arthur and his noble knyghtes whiche had wonne the felde, and had brought theyre prysoners to parys, and speke we of a senatour whiche escaped fro the bataille, and came to Lucius themperour & sayd to hym, Syre emperour I aduyse the for to withdrawe the, what dost thow here, thow shalt wynne noo thynge in these marches but grete strokes oute of al mesure. For this day one of Arthurs knyghtes was worth in the batayll an honderd of ours. Fy on the sayd Lucius thow spekest cowardly, for thy wordes greue me more than alle the losse that I had this day, and anone he sende forth a kynge whiche hyghte syr leomye with a grete armye, and badde hym hye hym fast to fore, and he wold folowe hastely after. kynge Arthur was warned pryuely, & sente his peple to Sessoyne, and toke vp the townes & castels fro the Romayns. Thenne the kyng commaunded syr Cador to take the rereward, & to take with hym certayne knyghtes of the round table, and syre Launcelot, syre Bors, syr kay, syre Marrok with syre Marhaus shalle awayte on our persone. Thus the kynge Arthur disperplyd his hoost in dyuerse partyes, to thende that his enemyes shold not escape. Whanne the Emperour was entryd in to the vale of Sessoyne, he myghte see where kynge Arthur was enbatailled and his baner dysplayed, and he was bysette round aboute with his enemyes, that nedes he must fyghte or yelde hym, for he myght not flee. But sayd openly vnto the Romayns, syrs I admoneste you that this day ye

fyghte and acquyte yow as men, and remembre how Rome domyneth and is chyef and hede ouer alle the erthe and vnyuersal world, and suffre not these bretons thys day to abyde ageynste vs, & ther with he dyd commaunde hys trōpettes to blowe the blody sownes in suche wyse that the ground trembled and dyndled. Thenne the batails approuched and shoue and showted on bothe sydes and grete strokes were smyten on bothe sydes, many men ouerthrowen, hurte, & slayn and grete valyaunces, prowesses and appertyces of werre were that day shewed, whiche were ouer long to recounte the noble feates of euery man. For they shold conteyne an hole volume. But in especyal kynge Arthur rode in the bataille exhortynge his knyghtes to doo wel, and hym self dyd as nobly with his handes as was possyble a man to doo, he drewe oute Excalibur his swerd, and awayted euer where as the romayns were thyckest and moost greued his peple, and anone he adressyd hym on that parte and hewe and slewe doune ryzt and rescued his peple, and he slewe a grete gyaunt named galapas, whiche was a man of an huge quantyte and heyghte, he shorted hym and smote of bothe his legges by the knees, sayenge, Now arte thow better of a syse to dele with, than thou were, and after smote of his hede. there syre gawayn foughte nobly and slewe thre admyrales in that bataill. And so dyd alle the knyghtes of the round table. Thus the bataill bitwene kynge Arthur and Lucius themperour endured longe. Lucius had on his syde many sarasyns, whiche were slayn, and thus the bataille was grete, and oftsydes that one party was at a fordele and anone at an afterdele, whiche endured so longe tyl at the last kyng Arthur aspyed where Lucius themperour fought, and dyd wonder with his owne handes. And anon he rode to hym, And eyther smote other fyersly, and atte last Lucyus smote Arthur thwart the vysage, and gaf hym a large wound. And whanne kyng Arthur felte hym self hurte, anon he smote hym ageyne with Excalibur that it clefte his hede fro the somette of his hede, and stynted not tyl it cam to his breste. And thenne themperour fylle doune dede, and there ended his lyf. And whan it was knowen that themperour was slayne anone alle the Romayns with all their hoost put them to flyght, and kynge Arthur with alle his knyghtes folowed the chaas, and slewe doune ryght alle them that they myghte atteyne.

And thus was the vyctory gyuen to kynge Arthur & the tryumphe, and there were slayne on the party of Lucius moo than an honderd thousand. And after kyng Arthur dyd doo ransake the dede bodyes, and dyd doo burye them that were slayne of his retenue euery man accordynge to the state & degree that he was of, And them that were hurte he lete the surgyens doo serche their hurtes and woundes, and commaunded to spare no salues ne medecynes tyl they were hole.

Thenne the kyng rode strayte to the place where themperour lucius lay dede, and with hym he fond slayne the Sowdan of Surrey, the kynge of Egypte and of Ethyope, whiche were two noble kynges with xvii other kynges of dyuerse regyons, and also syxty senatours of Rome al noble men, whome the kynge dyd do bawme and gomme with many good gommes aromatyk, and after dyd do cere them in syxty fold of cered clothe of Sendale, and leyd them in chestys of leed, by cause they shold not chauffe ne sauoure, and vpon alle these bodyes their sheldes with theire armes and baners were sette, to thende they shold be knowen of what countrey they were. and after he fonde thre Senatours whiche were on lyue to whome he sayd, for to saue your lyues I wylle that ye take these dede bodyes, and carye them with yow vnto grete Rome, and presente them to the potestate on my behalue shewynge hym my letters, and telle them that I in my persone shal hastely be atte Rome. And I suppose the Romayns shalle beware how they shal demaunde ony trybute of me. And I commaunde yow to saye whan ye shal come to Rome to the potestate and all the counceylle and Senate, that I sende to them these dede bodyes for the trybute that they haue demaunded. And yf they be not content with these, I shal paye more at my comynge, for other trybute owe I none, ne none other wylle I paye. And me thynketh this suffyseth for Bretayne, Irlond and al Almayne with germaynye. And ferthermore I charge yow to saye to them, that I commaunde them vpon payne of theyre hedes neuer to demaunde trybute ne taxe of me ne of my londes.

Thenne with this charge and commaundement the thre Senatours afore sayd departed with alle the sayd dede bodyes leynge the body of Lucius in a carre couerd with tharmes of the Empyre al alone. And after alwey two bodyes of kynges in a charyot, and thenne the

bodyes of the Senatours after them, and soo wente toward Rome, and shewed theyr legacyon & message to the potestate and Senate, recountyng the bataylle done in Fraunce, and how the feld was lost and moche people & Innumerable slayne. Wherfore they aduysed them in no wyse to meue no more warre ageynste that noble conqueroure Arthur. For his myght and prowesse is most to be doubted, seen the noble kynges and grete multytude of knyghtes of the round table, to whome none erthely prynce may compare.

Capitulo nono.

Now torne we vnto kynge Arthur and his noble knyghtes whiche after the grete bataylle acheued ageynste the Romayns, entryd in to Lorayne, braban and Flaundres, and sythen retorned in to hault Almayn, and so ouer the mõtayns in to lombardye, and after in to Tuskane, wherin was a Cyte, whiche in no wyse wold yelde them self ne obeye, wherfore kynge Arthur biseged it, and lay longe aboute hit, and gaf many assaultes to the Cyte. And they within deffended them valyauntly. Thenne on a tyme the kynge called syr florence a knyght, and sayd to hym they lacked vytaylle, and not ferre from hens ben grete forestes and woodes, wherin ben many of myn enemyes with moche bestyayl. I wyl that thou make the redy and goo thyder in foreyeng, and take with the syr Gawayn my neuew, Syre Wysshard, syre Clegys, Syre Cleremond, and the Captayn of Cardef with other, & brynge with yow alle the beestes that ye there can gete. And anone these knyghtes made them redy, and rode ouer holtys & hyllys, thurgh forestes and woodes, tyl they cam in to a fayr medow ful of fayre floures and grasse. And there they rested them & theyr horses alle that nyghte. And in the spryngynge of the day in the next morne, syre Gawayn took his hors and stale away from his felauship to seke some aduentures. And anon he was ware of a man armed walkynge his hors easyly by a wodes syde, and his sheld laced to his sholdre syttynge on a stronge courser withoute ony man sauyng a page berynge a myghty spere. The knyght bare in his sheld thre gryffons of gold in sable charbuncle the chyef of

syluer. Whan syre Gawayn aspyed this gay knyght, he fewtryd his spere and rode strayt to hym, and demaũded of hym from whens that he was, that other ansuerd and sayd he was of Tuscane, and demaunded of syre gawayn, what profryst thow proude knyghte the so boldly, here getest thou no praye, thou mayst proue whã thou wylt, for thou shalt be my prysoner or thou departe.

Thenne sayd gawayn, thou auauntest the gretely and spekest proude wordes. I coũceylle the for alle thy boost that thou make the redy, and take thy gere to the, to fore gretter grame falle to the.

Capitulum x.

THENNE they took theyr speres and ranne eche at other with alle the myghte they had, and smote eche other thurgh their sheldes in to theyr sholders, wherfore anone they pulled oute their swerdes, and smote grete strokes that the fyre sprange oute of their helmes. Thenne syre gawayne was al abasshed, and with galatyn his good swerd he smote thurgh shelde and thycke hauberke made of thyck maylles and al to russhed and brake the precious stones, and made hym a large wounde, that men myghte see bothe lyuer and long. Thenne groned that knyght, and adressyd hym to syre Gawayn, & with an awke stroke gaf hym a grete wound and kytte a vayne, whiche greued gawayn sore, and he bledde sore. Thenne the knyghte sayd to syre Gawayn, bynde thy wounde or thy bleed chaunge, for thou bybledest al thy hors and thy fayre armes. For alle the Barbours of Bretayne shall not conne staunche thy blood. For who someuer is hurte with this blade he shalle neuer be staunched of bledynge. Thenne ansuerd gawayn hit greueth me but lytyl, thy grete wordes shalle not feare me ne lasse my courage, but thow shalt suffre tene and sorow or we departe, but telle me in hast who maye staunche my bledynge. That may I doo sayd the knyght yf I wylle. And so wyll I yf thou wylt socoure and ayde me that I maye be crystned and byleue on god. And therof I requyre the of thy manhode, and it shalle be grete meryte for thy soule. I graunte said Gawayne so god helpe me taccomplysshe alle thy desyre. But fyrst

telle me what thou soughtest here thus allone, and of what londe and legeaunce thou arte of. Syre he sayd my name is Pryamus, and a grete prynce is my fader, and he hath ben rebelle vnto Rome and ouer ryden many of theyr londes. My fader is lyneally descended of Alysaunder and of hector by ryght lygne. And duke Josue and Machabeus were of oure lygnage. I am ryght enherytour of Alysaunder and auffryke and alle the oute yles, yet wyl I byleue on thy lord that thow byleuest on, And for thy laboure I shalle yeue the tresour ynough. I was soo elate and hauteyn in my hert that I thought no man my pere ne to me semblable. I was sente in to this werre with seuen score knyghtes, and now I haue encountred with the whiche haste gyuen to me of fyghtyng my fylle, wherfore syr knyghte I pray the to telle me what thow arte. I am no knyght sayd gawayn. I haue ben brought up in the garderobe with the noble kynge Arthur many yeres for to take hede to his armour and his other araye, and to poynte his paltockes that longen to hym self. At yole last he made me yoman and gaf to me hors and harneys and an honderd pound in money. And yf fortune be my frend, I doubte not, but to be wel auaunced and holpen by my lyege lord. A sayd Pryamus, yf his knauys be so kene and fyers, his knyztes ben passynge good. Now for the kynges loue of heuen whether thou be a knaue or a knyghte telle thou me thy name. By god sayd syre Gawayn, Now wyl I saye the sothe, my name is syre gawayn and knowen I am in his courte and in his chambre, and one of the knyghtes of the round table, he dubbed me a duke with his owne hand. Therfore grutche not yf this grace is to me fortuned, hit is the goodnesse of god that lente to me my strengthe. Now am I better pleasyd sayd Pryamus than thou haddest gyuen to me al the prouynce and parys the ryche. I had leuer to haue ben torn with wylde horses, than ony varlet had wonne suche loos, or ony page or pryker shold haue had prys on me. But now syre knyghte I warne the, that here by is a duke of Lorayne with his armye and the noblest men of Dolphyne and lordes of lombardye, with the garneson of godard, and sarasyns of Southland y^{t} nombred lx M of good men of armes, wherfore but yf we hye vs hens, it wylle harme vs bothe, for we ben sore hurte, neuer lyke to recouer, but take hede to my page that he no horne

blowe. For yf he doo ther ben houynge here fast by an C knyztes awaytynge on my persone, and yf they take the, ther shall no raunson of gold ne syluer acquyte the. Thenne syre gawayne rode ouer a water for to saue hym, And the knyghte folowed hym, and soo rode forthe tyl they came to his felawes, whiche were in the medowe, where they had ben al the nyghte. Anone as syre Wychard was ware of syre gawayn and sawe that he was hurte, he ranne to hym soroufully wepynge, and demaunded of hym who had soo hurte hym, and gawayn told how he had foughten with that man, and eche of them hadde hurte other, and how he had salues to hele them, but I can telle yow other tydynges, that soone we shal haue adoo with many enemyes. Thenne syre pryamus and syre gawayn alyghted, and lete theire horses grase in the medowe and vnarmed them. And thenne the blood ranne fresshly fro theyre woundes. And pryamus toke fro his page a vyolle ful of the four waters that came oute of paradys, and with certayne baume enoynted theyr woundes, and wesshe them with that water, & within an houre after, they were both as hole as euer they were. And thenne with a trompet were they alle assembled to counceylle. And there pryamus told vnto them, what lordes and knyghtes has sworne to rescowe hym, and that without faill they shold be assailled with many thousandes, wherfor he counceilled them to withdrawe them. Thenne syre gawayn sayd it were grete shame to them to auoyde withoute ony strokes. Wherfore I aduyse to take oure armes and to make us redy to mete with these sarasyns and mysbyleuyng men, and wyth the helpe of god we shal ouerthrowe them and haue a fayre day on them. And syre Florens shall abyde styll in thys felde to kepe the stale as a noble knyghte, and we shal not forsake yonder felawes. Now sayd Pryamus seasse your wordes, for I warne yow ye shal fynde in yonder woodes many peryllous knyghtes, they wylle put forthe beestes to calle yow on, they be out of nombre, and ye are not past vii C whiche ben ouer fewe to fyght with soo many. Neuertheles sayd syr gawayn we shal ones encountre them, and see what they can do, and the beste shalle haue the vyctory.

Capitulum xi.

THENNE syre Florence callyd to hym syre florydas with an honderd knyghtes and droofe forth the herde of bestes. Thenne folowed hym vii honderd men of armes, and syr Feraunt of spayne on a fayr stede came spryngynge oute of the woodes, and came to syre Florence and axyd hym why he fledde. Thenne syre Florence took his spere, and rode ageynste hym, and smote hym in the forhede and brake his necke bone. Thenne all thother were meued, and thought to auenge the dethe of syr Feraunt, and smote in amonge them, and there was grete fyghte and many slayne and leyd doune to grounde, and syr Florence with his C knyghtes alwey kepte the stale and foughte manly. Thenne whan Pryamus the good knyght perceyued the grete fyght, he wente to syre Gawayn, and badde hym that he shold goo and socoure his felauship, whiche were sore bystad with their enemyes. Syr greue yow not sayd syre Gawayn, For theyr gree shall be theirs. I shall not ones meue my hors to them ward, but yf I see mo than ther ben, For they ben stronge ynough to matche them, & with that he sawe an erle called syre Ethelwold and the duke of duchemen cam lepyng out of a wood with many thousādes & pryamus knyztes, & cam strayte vnto the bataylle, thēne sir gawayn comforted his knyghtes, and bad them not to be abasshed, for al shal be ours, thēne they began to wallope & mette with their enemyes, ther were mē slayn & ouerthrowen on euery syde. Thenne threstyd in amonge them the knyghtes of the table round, and smote doune to the erthe alle them that wythstode them, in soo moche that they made them to recuyelle & flee. By god sayd syre Gawayn this gladeth my herte, for now ben they lasse in nombre by xx M. Thenne entryd in to the bataylle Jubaunce a geaunt, and fought and slewe doune ryght and distressyd many of our knyghtes, amonge whome was slayne syre Gherard a knyght of Walys. Thenne oure knyghtes toke herte to them, and slewe many sarasyns. And thenne came in syr Priamus with his penon, and rode with the knyghtes of the round table, and fought so manfully that many of their enemyes lost theyr lyues. And ther syr Pryamus

slewe the Marquys of Moyses land, and syre gawayn with his felawes so quytte hem that they had the feld, but in that stoure was syr Chestelayne a chyld and ward of syre Gawayne slayne, wherfore was moche sorou made, and his deth was soone auengyd. Thus was the bataille ended and many lordes of lombardye and sarasyns left dede in the feld.

Thenne syre florence and syre Gawayne herberowed surely theyr peple, and token grete plente of bestyal of gold & syluer and grete tresour and rychesse, and retorned vnto kyng Arthur whiche lay styl at the syege. And whanne they came to the kynge, they presented theyr prysoners and recounted theyre aduentures, and how they had vaynquysshed theyre enemyes.

Capitulum xii.

Now thanked be god sayd the noble kynge Arthur. But what maner man is he that standeth by hym self hym semed no prysoner. Syre sayd Gawayne this is a good man of armes, he hath matched me, but he is yolden vnto god and to me for to bycome Crysten, had not he haue be we shold neuer haue retorned, wherfore I pray yow that he may be baptysed, for ther lyueth not a nobler man ne better knyght of his handes, thenne the kyng lete hym anon be crystned, and dyd doo calle hym his fyrste name Pryamus, and made hym a duke and knyghte of the table round. And thenne anon the kynge lete do crye assaulte to the cyte, and there was rerynge of laddres, brekyng of wallys and the dyche fylled, that men with lytel payne myzt entre in to the cyte. thenne cam out a duchesse, & Clarysyn the countesse with many ladyes & damoysels, and knelyng bifore kynge Arthur requyred hym for the loue of god to receyue the cyte, & not to take it by assaulte for thenne shold many gyltles be slayne. thenne the kyng aualyd his vyser with a meke & noble coũtenaũce, & said madame ther shal none of my subgettys mysdoo you ne your maydens, ne to none that to yow longen, but the duke shal abyde my jugement. thenne anone the kyng commaunded to leue the assault, & anon the dukes oldest sone brought out the keyes, & knelyng

delyuerd them to the kyng, & bysouzt hym of grace, & the kyng seased the toun by assent of his lordes, & toke the duc & sent hym to douer there for to abyde prysoner terme of his lyf & assigned certayn rentes for the dower of the duchesse & for her children. Thenne he made lordes to rule tho londes & lawes as a lord ought to do in his owne countrey, & after he took his iourney toward Rome, & sent sir Florys & syr florydas to fore with v C men of armes, & they cam to the cyte of vrbyne & leid there a busshement there as them semed most best for them, & rode to fore the toune, where anon yssued out moche peple & scarmusshed with the fore rydars. Thēne brake out the busshement & wan the brydge & after the toun, & set vpon the wallis the kynges baner, thēne cam the kynge vpon an hille & sawe the Cyte & his baner on the wallys, by whiche he knewe that the Cyte was wonne, & anone he sente & commaunded that none of his lyege men shold defoule ne lygge by no lady, wyf, ne maide, & whan he cam in to the cyte, he passid to the castel, and comforted them that were in sorou, & ordeyned ther a captayn a knyzt of his own coūtrey. & whan they of Melane herd that thylk cyte was wōne, they sent to kyng Arthur grete sōmes of money, & besouzt hym as their lord to haue pyte on them, promysyng to be his subgettys for euer, & yelde to hym homage & fealte for the lādes of pleasaūce & pauye, petersaynt & the port of tremble, & to gyue hym yerly a melyon of gold al his lyf tyme. Thēne he rydeth in to Tuskane & wynneth tounes & castels & wasted al in his way that to hym wil not obeye, & so to spolute and viterbe, & fro thens he rode in to the vale of vycecoūte emong the vynes. And fro thens he sente to the senatours to wete, whether they wold knowe hym for theyr lord. But soone after on a saterday came vnto kynge Arthur alle the senatours that were left on lyue, and the noblest Cardynals that thenne dwellyd in Rome. And prayd hym of pees, and profered hym ful large. And bysought hym as gouernour to gyue lycence for vi wekes for to assemble alle the Romayns. And thenne to crō̄ne hym Emperour with creme as it bylongeth to so hyhe astate. I assente sayd the kynge lyke as ye haue deuysed, and at crystemas there to be crowned, and to holde my round table with my knyghtes as me lyketh. And thenne the senatours maade redy for his Intronysacyon. And at the

day appoynted as the Romaunce telleth he came in to Rome, and was crouned emperour by the popes hand with all the ryalte that coude be made. And sudgerned there a tyme, and establysshed all his londes from Rome in to Fraunce, and gaf londes and royammes vnto his seruauntes and knyghtes to euerych after his desert, in suche wyse that none complayned ryche ne poure, & he gafe to syre Pryamus the duchye of Lorayne, and he thanked hym, and sayd he wold serue hym the dayes of his lyf, and after made dukes and erles, and made euery man ryche. Thenne after this alle his knyghtes and lordes assembled them afore hym, and sayd blessyd be god your warre is fynysshed and your conquest acheued, in soo moche that we knowe none soo grete ne myghty that dar make warre ageynst yow. Wherfore we byseche you to retorne homeward, and gyue vs lycence to go home to oure wyues, fro whome we haue ben longe, and to reste vs, for your journey is fynysshed with honour & worship. Thenne sayd the kyng, ye saye trouthe, and for to tempte god it is no wysedome. And therfore make you redy and retorne we in to Englond. Thenne there was trussyng of harneis and bagage and grete caryage. And after lycence gyuen, he retorned and commaunded that noo man in payne of dethe shold not robbe ne take vytaylle, ne other thynge by the way but that he shold paye therfore. And thus he came ouer the see and londed at sandwyche, ageynste whome Quene Gweneuer his wyf came and mette hym, and he was nobly receyued of alle his comyns in euery cyte and burgh, and grete yeftes presented to hym at his home comyng to welcome hym with.

Thus endeth the fyfthe booke of the conqueste that kynge Arthur hadde ageynste Lucius the Emperoure of Rome, and here foloweth the sixth book, whiche is of syr Launcelot du lake.

Capitulum primum.

OONE after that kyng Arthur was come, fro rome in to Englond, thenne alle the knyghtes of the table round resorted vnto the kyng, & made many justes & turnementes, & some there were that were but knyztes whiche encreaced so in armes and worship that they passed alle their felawes in prowesse and noble dedes, and that was wel preued on many. But in especyal it was preued on syre launcelot du lake, for in al turnementys and Justes and dedes of armes both for lyf and deth he passed al other knyztes, and at no tyme he was neuer ouercome, but yf it were by treson or enchauntement, so syr Launcelot encreaced soo merueyllously in worship, and in honour, therfor is he the fyrst knyzt that the frensshe book maketh mencyon of after kynge Arthur came fro rome, wherfore quene gweneuer had hym in grete fauour aboue al other knyghtes. And in certayne he loued the quene ageyne aboue al other ladyes & damoysels of his lyf. And for her he dyd many dedes of armes and saued her from the fyer thorou his noble chyualry. Thus syre

launcelot rested hym longe with play & game. And thenne he thought hym self to preue hym self in straunge auentures. thenne he badde his neuewe syre Lyonel for to make hym redy, for we two wylle seke aduentures. So they mounted on their horses armed at al ryghtes, and rode in to a depe forest & soo in to a depe playne. And thenne the weder was hote about noone, and syre launcelot had grete lust to slepe. Thenne syr lyonel aspyed a grete Appyl tree that stode by an hedge, & said broder yonder is a fayre shadowe, there maye we reste vs on oure horses, hit is wel saide faire broder said syr launcelot, for this vii yere I was not so slepy as I am now, and so they there alyghted & tayed their horses vnto sondry trees, and so syr launcelot layd hym doune vnder an appyl tree, and his helme he layd vnder his hede. And Syre lyonel waked whyle he slepte. Soo syre launcelot was a slepe passynge fast. And in the mene whyle there came thre knyghtes rydynge as faste fleynge as euer they myghte ryde. And there folowed hem thre but one knyghte. And whanne syr lyonel sawe hym, hym thought he sawe neuer so grete a knyghte nor soo wel farynge a man neyther soo wel apparailled vnto al ryghtes. Soo within a whyle this strong knyzt had ouertaken one of these knyghtes, and there he smote hym to the cold erth that he lay styll. And than he rode vnto the second knyght, and smote hym soo that man and hors felle doune. And thenne streyghte to the thyrdde knyghte he rode and smote hym behynde his hors ars a spere length. And thenne he alyghte doune and arayned his hors on the brydel & bonde alle the thre knyghtes fast with the raynes of their owne brydels. Whan syr lyonel sawe hym doo thus, he thought to assay hym, & made hym redy & stylly, and pryuely he took his hors & thoughte not for to awake syr launcelot. And whan he was mounted vpon his hors, he ouertoke this strong knyght, & bad hym torne, and the other smote syr lyonel so hard that hors & man he bare to the erthe, & so he alyght doun & bound hym fast and threwe hym ouerthwart his owne hors, and soo he serued hem al foure, & rode with hem awey to his owne castel. And whan he came there he garte vnarme them & bete hem with thornys al naked, & after put hem in a depe pryson where were many mo knyghtes that made grete doloure.

Capitulum secundum.

WHAN syre Ector de marys wyst that syre laũcelot was past out of the court to seke aduentures he was wroth with hym self, & made hym redy to seke syre laũcelot, & as he had ryden long in a grete forest he mette with a man was lyke a foster. Fayre felaw said syre Ector knowest thou in thys countrey ony aduentures than ben here nyghe hand. Syr sayd the foster, this countrey knowe I wel, and here by within thys myle, is a stronge manoir and wel dyked, & by that manoir on the lyfte hand there is a faire fourde for horses to drynke of, and ouer that fourde there groweth a fayr tree, and theron hangen many fayre sheldes that welded somtyme good knyghtes, & atte hoole of the tree hangeth a bacyn of coper & latoen, and stryke vpon that bacyn with the but of thy spere thryes. And soone after thou shalt here newe tydynges. And ellys hast thou the fayrest grace that many a yere had euer knyght that passed thorou this forest. gramercy sayd syre Ector, and departed, and came to the tree and sawe many fayre sheldes. And amonge them he sawe his broders sheld syr Lyonel and many moo that he knewe that were his felawes of the round table, the whiche greued his herte, and promysed to reuenge his broder. Thenne anone syr Ector bete on the bacyn as he were wood, and thenne he gaf his hors drynke at the fourde, & ther came a knyghte behynd hym, and bad hym come oute of the water and make hym redy, and syre Ector anone torned hym shortly and in fewter cast his spere and smote the other knyghte a grete buffet that his hors torned twyes aboute. This was wel done said the strong knyzt, & knyztly thou hast stryken me. And therwith he russhed his hors on syre Ector, and cleyzte hym vnder his ryght arme & bare hym clene out of the sadel, and rode with hym awey in to his owne halle, & threwe hym doune in myddes of the floore, the name of thys knyghte was syre Turquyne, than he said vnto syre Ector for thou hast done this day more vnto me than ony knyghte dyd these xii yeres. Now wille I graunte the thy lyf so thou wilt be sworn to be my prysoner all thy lyf dayes. Nay said sir Ector, that wylle I neuer promyse the, but that I will do myne auauntage.

That me repenteth sayd syre Turquyne, and thenne he garte to vnarme hym and bete hym with thornys all naked, and sythen putte hym doune in a depe dungeon where he knewe many of his felawes. But whan syre Ector sawe syre lyonel thenne made he grete sorowe. Allas broder sayd syr Ector, where is my broder syre Launcelot. Fayre broder I lefte hym on slepe whan that I from hym yode vnder an appel tree, and what is become of hym I can not telle yow. Allas said the knyghtes, but syre launcelot helpe vs we may neuer be delyuerd, for we knowe now noo knyght that is able to matche oure mayster Turquyn.

Capitulum tercium.

Now leue we these knyghtes prysoners and speke we of syre Launcelott du lake that lyeth vnder the Appyl Tree slepynge, euen aboute the noone there come by hym foure quenes of grete estate. And for the hete shold not nyhe hem there rode foure knyghtes aboute hem, and bare a clothe of grene sylke on foure sperys betwixe them and the sonne. And the quenes rode on foure whyte mules.

Thus as they rode they herde by them a grete hors grymly neye, thenne were they ware of a slepynge knyghte that laye alle armed vnder an appyl tree, anone as these quenes loked on his face, they knewe it was syre launcelot. Thenne they beganne for to stryue for that knyghte, euerychone sayd they wold haue hym to her loue. We shalle not stryue sayd Morgan le fay that was kynge Arthurs syster, I shalle putte an enchauntement vpon hym, that he shalle not awake in syxe owres. And thenne I wylle lede hym awey vnto my castel. And whanne he is surely within my hold, I shalle take the enchauntement from hym. And thenne lete hym chese whyche of vs he wylle haue vnto peramour. Soo thys enchauntement was caste vpon syre Launcelott. And thenne they leyd hym vpon his shelde, and bare hym soo on horsback betwixt two knyghtes, and brought hym vnto the castel charyot, and there they leyd hym in a chambyr cold, and atte nyghte they sente vnto hym a fayre damoysel with his souper redy dyght. By that the enchauntement was past. And whan

she came she salewed hym, and asked hym what chere. I can not saye fayre damoysel said syre Launcelot, for I wote not how I cam in to this castel, but it be by an enchauntement. Syre sayd she ye must make good chere. And yf ye be suche a knyzte as it is sayd ye ben, I shalle telle you more to morne by pryme of the daye. Gramercy fayre damoysel sayd syre Launcelot of youre good wyl I requyre yow. And soo she departed. And there he laye alle that nyght withoute comforte of ony body.

And on the morne erly came these foure quenes passyngly wel bysene. Alle they byddyng hym good morne, and he them ageyne. Syre knyghte the foure quenes sayd thow must vnderstande thou arte our prysoner, and we here knowe the wel that thou arte syre Launcelot du laake, kynge Bans sone. And by cause we vnderstande your worthynes that thou arte the noblest knyght lyuyng. And as we knowe wel ther can no lady haue thy loue but one, and that is quene Gueneuer, and now thow shalt lose her for euer and she the, and therfore the behoueth now to chese one of vs four. I am the quene Morgan le fay quene of the land of Gorre, and here is the quene of Northgalys and the quene of Eestland, and the quene of the oute yles. Now chese one of vs whiche thow wylt haue to thy peramour, for thou mayst not chese or els in thys pryson to dye. This is an hard caas sayd syre Launcelot that eyther I muste dye or els chese one of yow, yet had I leuer to dye in this pryson with worship than to haue one of yow to my peramour maugre my hede. And therfore ye be ansuerd I wylle none of yow for ye be fals enchauntresses. And as for my lady dame Gueneuer, were I at my lyberte as I was, I wolde preue hit on you or on yours, that she is the truest lady vnto her lord lyuyng. Wel sayd the quenes, is this your ansuer that ye wylle reffuse vs, ye on my lyf sayd syr laūcelot, reffused ye ben of me. Soo they departed and lefte hym there alone that made grete sorowe.

Capitulum quartum.

Ryght so at the noone came the damoysel vnto hym with his dyner, and asked hym what chere, truly fayre damoysel sayd syre Launcelot in my lyf dayes neuer so ylle, sir she sayd that me repentest, but and ye wylle be reulyd by me, I shal help you out of this distresse, and ye shal haue no shame nor vylony soo that ye hold me a promyse, fayre damoysel I wil graunte yow, and sore I am of these quenes sorceresses aferd, for they haue destroyed many a good knyght, syre sayd she that is sothe and for the renome and bounte that they here of you, they wold haue your loue, and sir they sayne, your name is syre Launcelot du laake the floure of knyghtes, & they be passynge wrothe with yow that ye haue reffused hem. But syre and ye wold promyse me to helpe my fader on tewsdaye next comynge, that hath made a turnement betwixe hym and the kynge of Northgalys, for the last tewesdaye past my fader lost the felde thorugh thre knyghtes of Arthurs courte. And ye wyll be there on tewesday next comyng, and helpe my fader to morne or pryme by the grace of god I shalle delyuer yow clene. Fayre mayden sayd syr launcelot telle me what is your faders name, and thenne shal I gyue you an answer. Syre knyghte she sayd, my fader is kyng Bagdemagus that was foule rebuked at the last turnement. I knowe your fader wel said syre launcelot for a noble kyng and a good knyghte.

And by the feythe of my body ye shalle haue my body redy to doo your fader and you seruyse at that day. Syre she sayd gramercy, and to morne awayte ye be redy by tymes and I shal be she that shal delyuer you, and take you your armoure and your hors shelde and spere. And here by within this x myle is an Abbey of whyte monkes, there I praye you that ye me abyde, and thyder shal I brynge my fader vnto you. alle thys shal be done saide syre Launcelot as I am true knyghte, and soo she departed and came on the morne erly, and found hym redy, thenne she brought hym oute of twelue lockes & brouzt hym vnto his armour, & whan he was clene armed, she brought hym vntyl his owne hors, and lyghtely he sadeled hym and toke a grete spere in his hand, and soo rode forth, and sayd

fayre damoysel I shal not faile you by the grace of god. And soo he rode in to a grete forest all that day, and neuer coude fynde no hyghe waye, and soo the nyght felle on hym, and thenne was he ware in a slade of a pauelione of reed sendel. By my feythe sayd syre launcelot in that pauelione wil I lodge alle this nyghte, and soo there he alyghte doune and tayed his hors to the pauelione, and there he vnarmed hym, and there he fond a bedde, and layd hym theryn, and felle on slepe sadly.

Capitulum v.

THENNE within an houre there came the knyghte to whome the pauelione ought. And he wende that his lemā had layne in that bedde, and soo he laid hym doune besyde syr Launcelot, and toke hym in his armes and beganne to kysse hym. And whanne syre launcelot felte a rough berd kyssyng hym, he starte oute of the bedde lyghtely, and the other knyzt after hym, and eyther of hem gate their swerdes in theire handes, and oute at the pauelione dore wente the knyghte of the pauelione, and syre launcelot folowed hym, and ther by a lytel slake syr launcelot wounded hym sore nyghe vnto the deth. And thenne he yelded hym vnto syre launcelot, and so he graūted hym so that he wold telle hym why he came in to the bedde. Syre sayd the knyght the pauelione is myn owne, and there thys nyght I had assygned my lady to haue slepte with me. And now I am lykely to dye of this wounde, that me repenteth sayd Launcelot of youre hurte, but I was adrad of treson, for I was late begyled, and therfore come on your way in to your pauelione and take your rest. And as I suppose I shalle staunche your blood, and soo they wente bothe in to the pauelione. And anone syre launcelot staunched his blood.

There with al came the knyghtes lady, that was a passynge fayre lady. And whanne she aspyed that her lord Belleus was sore wounded she cryed oute on syre launcelot, and made grete dole oute of mesure. Pees my lady and my loue said Belleus, for this knyght is a good man and a knyght aduenturous, and there he told her all

the cause how he was woūded. And whan that I yolde me vntò hym, he lefte me goodely and hath staunched my blood. Syre sayd the lady I requyre the telle me what knyght ye be, and what is youre name. Fayr lady he sayd, my name is syre launcelot du lake. soo me thought euer by your speche sayd the lady, for I have sene yow ofte or this, and I knowe you better than ye wene. But now and ye wold promyse me of your curtosy for the harmes that ye haue done to me and to my lord Belleus that whanne he cometh vnto Arthurs courte for to cause hym to be made knyghte of the roūd table, for he is a passyng good man of armes and a myghty lord of landes of many oute yles.

Fayre lady said syre launcelot lete hym come vnto the courte the next hyhe feest, and loke that ye come with hym, and I shal doò my power, and ye preue you doughty of your handes that ye shalle haue your desyre. So thus within a whyle as they thus talked the nyghte passed, and the daye shone, and thenne syre launcelot armed hym, and took his hors, and they taught hym to the Abbaye and thyder he rode within the space of two owrys.

Capitulum sextum.

And soone as syre launcelott came withyn the Abbeye yarde, the doughter of kynge Bagdemagus herd a grete hors goo on the pauyment. And she thenne aroos and yede vntò a wyndowe, and there she sawe syr launcelot, and anone she made men fast to take his hors from hym, & lete lede hym in to a stabyl, and hym self was ledde in to a fayre chamber, and vnarmed hym, and the lady sente hym a longe goune, & anone she came her self. And thēne she made launcelot passyng good chere, and she sayd he was the knyzt in the world was moost welcome to her. Thenne in al haste she sente for her fader Bagdemagus that was within xii myle of that Abbay, and afore euen he came with a fayre felauship of knyghtes wyth hym. And whanne the kynge was alyghte of his hors he yode streyte vnto syr launcelots chamber, and there he fond hys doughter, and thenne the kyng enbraced syr Launcelot in hys armes and eyther made

other good chere. Anone syre launcelot made his complaynt vnto the kynge how he was bytrayed, And how his broder syre lyonel was departed from hym, he wyst not where, and how his doughter had delyuerd hym out of pryson, therfor whyle I lyue I shal doo her seruyse and al her kynred. Thenne am I sure of youre helpe sayd the kynge on tewesday next comynge, ye syr sayd syr launcelot, I shalle not faylle yow, for soo I haue promysed my lady your doughter. But syre what knyghtes be they of my lord Arthurs that were with the kynge of Northgalys, and the kyng sayd it was syre madore de laporte, and syr Mordred and syr gahalaytyne that al fur fared my knyghtes, for ageynst hem thre I nor my knyghtes myghte bere no strengthe. Syre sayde syre launcelot as I here say that the turnement shal be here within this thre myle of this abbay, ye shal sende vnto me thre knyghtes of yours suche as ye trust and loke that the thre knyghtes haue al whyte sheldes & I also & no paynture on the sheldes, and we four will come out of a lytel wood in myddes of both partyes, and we shalle falle in the frounte of oure enemyes & greue hem that wè may. And thus shal I not be knowen what knyght I am. Soo they took their rest that nyght, and thys was on the sonday, and soo the kyng departed, and sente vnto syre launcelot thre knyghtes with the four whyte sheldes.

And on the tewesday they lodged hem in a lytyl leued wood besyde there the turnement shold be. And there were scaffoldis and holes that lordes and ladyes myghte beholde and to gyue the pryse. Thenne came in to the feld the kyng of Northgalys with eyght score helmes. And thenne the thre knyghtes of Arthurs stode by them self. Thenne cam in to the feld kyng Bagdemagus with four score of helmys. And thenne they fewtryd their sperys, and cam to gyders with a grete dasshe, & there were slayn of knyghtes at the first recountre xii of kyng Bagdemagus parte, and syx of the kyng of Northgalys party, and kyng Bagdemagus party was ferre sette a back.

Capitulum septimum.

WYTH that came syr Launcelot du lake and he threste in with his spere in the thyckest of the prees, and there he smote doune with one spere fyue knyghtes, and of foure of hem he brake their backes. And in that throng he smote doune the kynge of Northgalys, and brake his thye in that falle. Alle thys doyng of syre Launcelot sawe the thre knyghtes of Arthurs. Yonder is a shrewde gest sayd syre Madore de la port, therfore haue here ones at hym, soo they encountred, and syre Launcelot bare hym doune hors and man, soo that his sholder wente oute of lyth. Now befalleth it to me to Juste sayd Mordred, for syr Mador hath a sore falle. Syre Launcelot was ware of hym, and gate a grete spere in his hand, and mette hym and syr Mordred brake a spere vpon hym, and syre launcelot gaf hym suche a buffet that the arsson of his sadel brake, & soo he flewe ouer his hors taylle that his helme butte in to the erthe a foote and more that nyhe his necke was broken, & there he lay longe in a swoune. Thenne came in syr Gahalantyne with a grete spere, and Launcelot ageynst hym with al theyre strength that they myzt dryue that both her speres to brast euen to their handes, and thenne they flang out with their swerdes and gaf many a grym stroke. Thenne was syr launcelot wroth oute of mesure, and thēne he smote syr galahantyne on the helme that his nose braste oute on blood and eerys and mouthe bothe, and ther with his hede henge lowe. And ther with his hors ranne awey with hym, and he felle doune to the erthe.

Anone there with al syre launcelot gate a greete spere in hys hand. And or euer that grete spere brake, he bare doune to the erthe xvi knyghtes some hors and man, and some the man & not the hors, & ther was none but that he hyt surely he bare none armes that day. And thenne he gate another grete spere & smote doune twelue knyghtes, and the moost party of hem neuer throfe after. And thēne the knyztes of the kyng of north galys wold Juste no more. And there the gree was gyuen to kynge Bagdemagus. So eyther party departed vnto his owne place, and syr launcelot rode forth with kynge Bagdemagus vnto his castel, and there he had pass-

ynge good chere both with the kyng and with his doughter, and they profred hym grete yeftes. And on the morne he took his leue, and told the kynge that he wold goo and seke his broder syre Lyonel that wente from hym whan that he slepte, so he toke his hors, and betaught hem alle to god. And there he sayd vnto the kynges doughter yf ye haue nede ony tyme of my seruyse I praye you lete me haue knouleche, and I shal not faylle you as I am true knyght, and so syr launcelot departed, and by aduenture he came in to the same forest, there he was take slepyng. And in the myddes of an hyhe way he mette a damoysel rydyng on a whyte palfroy, and there eyther salewed other. Fayre damoysel said syre launcelot knowe ye in this countray ony aduentures, syre knyghte sayd that damoysel, here are aduentures nere hand, and thou durst preue hem. Why shold I not preue aduentures said syre launcelot for that cause come I hyder. Wel sayd she thou semest wel to be a good knyght. And yf thou dare mete with a good knyght, I shal brynge the where is the best knyght, and the myghtyest that euer thou fond, so thou wylt telle me what is thy name, and what knyght thou arte, damoysel as for to telle the my name I take no grete force. Truly my name is syre laūcelot du lake, syre thou bysemyst wel, here ben aduentures by that fallen for the, for here by duelleth a knyght that wylle not be ouermatched for no man I knowe but ye ouermatche hym, & his name is syre Turquyne. And as I vnderstand he hath in his pryson of Arthurs courte good knyghtes thre score and foure, that he hath wonne with his owne handes. But whan ye haue done that journey ye shal promyse me as ye are a true knyght for to go with me and to helpe me, and other damoysels that are distressid dayly with a fals knyghte. All your entente damoysel and desyre I wylle fulfylle, soo ye wyl brynge me vnto this knyghte. Now fayre knyght come on your waye, and soo she broughte hym vnto the fourde and the tre where henge the bacyn. So sir launcelot lete his hors drynke, and sythen he bete on the bacyn with the butte of his spere so hard with al his myzt tyl the bottom felle oute, and longe he dyd soo but he sawe noo thynge. Thenne he rode endlong the gates of that manoyre nyghe half an houre. And thenne was he ware of a grete knyzt that drofe an hors afore hym, and ouerthwarte the hors

there lay an armed knyght bounden. And euer as they came nere and nere, syre launcelot thouzt he shold knowe hym. Thenne sir launcelot was ware that hit was syre gaherys Gawayns broder a knyghte of the table round. Now fayre damoysel sayd sir launcelot, I see yonder cometh a knyght fast bounden that is a felawe of myne, and broder he is vnto syr gawayne. And att the fyrst begynnyng I promyse yow by the leue of god to rescowe that knyght. But yf his mayster sytte better in the sadel I shal delyuer alle the prysoners that he hath oute of daunger, for I am sure he hath two bretheren of myne prysoners with hym. By that tyme that eyther had sene other, they grypped theyr speres vnto them. Now fayre knyghte sayd syr launcelot, put that wounded knyghte of the hors, and lete hym reste a whyle, and lete vs two preue oure strengthes. For as it is enformed me thou doest and hast done grete despyte and shame vnto knyghtes of the round table, and therfor now defende the. And thow be of the table round sayd Turquyne I defye the and alle thy felauship. that is ouermoche sayd, sayd syre launcclot.

Capitulum viii.

And thēne they put theyr speres in the restys, & cam to gyders with her horses as fast as they myght renne. And eyther smote other in myddes of theyre sheldes that bothe theyre horse backes braste vnder them, and the knyghtes were bothe astonyed, and as soone as they myghte auoyde theyre horses, they took theire sheldes afore them, and drewe oute her swerdes, and came to gyder egerly, and eyther gaf other many stronge strokes, for there myght neyder sheldes nor harneis hold theyr strokes. And soo within a whyle they hadde bothe grymly woundes, and bledde passynge greuously. Thus they ferd two houres or mo trasyng and rasyng eyther other where they myght hytte ony bare place. Thenne at the last they were bretheles bothe, and stode lenyng on theyre swerdes. Now felawe sayd syr Turquyne hold thy hand a whyle, and telle me what I shal aske the. Say on. thenne Turquyne sayd thou arte the byggest man that euer I mette with al, and the beste brethed, and lyke on

knyzt that I hate aboue al other knyghtes, so be hit that thou be not he I wyl lyghtly accorde with the, & for thy loue I wil delyuer al the prysoners that I haue that is thre score and foure, soo thou wylt tell me thy name. And thou and I we wyl be felawes to gyders and neuer to fayle the whyle that I lyue. it is wel sayd, sayd syr launcelot, but sythen hit is soo that I may haue thy frendship, what knyght is he that thou soo hatest aboue al other. Feythfully said syr Turquyne his name is syre launcelot du lake, for he slewe my broder syr Caradus at the dolorous toure that was one of the best knyghtes on lyue. And therfore hym I excepte of al knyghtes, for may I ones mete with hym, the one of vs shal make an ende of other I make myn auowe. And for sir launcelots sake I haue slayne an C good knyghtes, and as many I haue maymed al vtterly that they myght neuer after helpe them self, and many haue dyed in pryson, and yet haue I thre score and foure, and al shal be delyuerd so thou wilt telle me thy name, so be it that thou be not syre launcelot.

Now see I wel sayd syre launcelot that suche a man I myghte be I myght haue peas, and suche a man I myghte be, that ther shold be mortal warre betwixt vs. And now syr knyght at thy request I wyl that thou wete and knowe that I am Laūcelot du lake kynge Bans sone of Benwyck, and uery knyghte of the table round. And now I defye the doo thy best. A sayd syr Turquyne, Laūcelot thou art vnto me moost welcom that euer was knyght, for we shal neuer departe tyll the one of vs be dede. And thēne they hurtled togyders as two wylde bulles rasshynge and lasshynge with theyr sheldes and swerdes that somtyme they felle both ouer theyr noses. Thus they fought stylle two houres and more, and neuer wold haue reste, and syr Turquyne gaf syr Laūcelot many woūdes that all the groūde there as they fought was all besperpled with blood.

Ca. ix.

THENNE at the last syr Turquyne waxed sore faynte, and gaf somwhat aback, and bare his shelde full lowe for werynesse. That aspyed syr Launcelot soone, and lepte thenne vpon hym fyersly as a

lyon and gate hym by the Bauowre of his helmet, and so he plucked hym downe on his knees. And anone he racyd of his helme, and thenne he smote his nécke in sonder. And whan syr Laūcelot hadde done this, thenne he yode vnto the damoysel and sayd to her, damoysel I am redy to go with yow where that ye wyl haue me, but I haue noo hors. Fayr syr sayd the damoysel, take ye this wounded knyghtes hors and sende hym in to this manoyr, and commaunde hym for to delyuer all the prysoners. And soo syr Launcelot wente vnto syr Gaherys, and prayed hym not to be agreued for to lene hym his hors. Nay fayre lorde sayd Gaherys, I wyl that ye take my hors atte your owne cōmaūdement, for ye haue both saued me and my hors, and this daye I saye ye are the best knyght in the worlde, For ye haue slayne this daye in my syght the myghtyest man and the best knyght except yow that euer I sawe, and fayre syr sayd Gaherys I praye yow telle me your name. Syr my name is syr Laūcelot du lake that ought to helpe you of ryght for Kynge Arthurs sake, and in especyall for my lorde syr Gawayns sake your owne dere broder, and whanne that ye come within yonder manoyr, I am sure that ye shal fynde there many knyghtes of the roūdè table, for I haue sene many of theyr sheldes that I knowe on yonder tree. there is syr Kays sheldè, and syr Brandeles shelde and Marhaus shelde, and syr Galyndes shelde, and syr Bryan the lystnoyse shelde and syr Alydukes shelde with many more that I am not now auysed of, and also my two bretherens sheldes, syre Ector de marys and syr Lyonell, wherfor I praye you grete them al from me, and saye that I bydde them take theyre suche stuffe as they fynde, and that in any wyse my bretheren goo vnto the Courte and abyde me there tyll that I come thyder, for by the feeste of Pentecost I thynke to be there, for as at this tyme I must ryde with this damoysel for to saue my promesse, and so he departed from syr Gaherys, and Gaherys yede in to the manoyr and there he fonde a yeman porter kepynge there many keyes. And forth with all syr Gaherys threwe the porter ayenst the grounde and toke the keyes fro hym, and hastly he opened the pryson dore, and there he lette out al the prysoners, and euery man loses other of theyr bandes. And whanne they sawe sir Gaherys, they all thanked hym, for they wende by cause he was wounded that he had slayne syr

Turquyne. Not soo said Gaherys, hit was syr Launcelot that slewe hym worshypfully wyth his owne handes. I sawe it with mine eyen. And he greted you alle wel, and prayeth yow to haste yow to the Courte, and as vnto sir Lyonell & syr Ector de marys he prayeth you to abyde hym at the Courte. That shal we not doo sayd his bretheren, we wyl fynde hym and we may lyue. Soo shall I said sir Kaye fynde hym or I come at the Courte as I am true Knyghte. Thenne al the knyghtes sought the house wher as the armour was, and thenne they armed them, & every knyght fond his own hors and all that belonged vnto hym. And whanne all thys was done, ther came a foreyster with four horses laden wyth veneson. Anone sir Kay said here is good mete for vs for one meale, for we had not many a daye one good repaste. And so that veneson was rosted, baked, and soden, and so after souper some abode ther al nyghte, but syr Lyonell and syr Ector de marys and syr kay rode after sir Launcelot for to fynde hym if they myghte.

Capitulum x.

Now torne we vnto syre launcelot that rode with the damoysel in a fayre hyghe waye. syr sayd the damoysel, here by this way haunteth a knyght that destressyd al ladyes and gentylwymmen. And at the leest he robbeth them or lyeth by them. What said sir launcelot is he a theef & a knyght & a rauyssher of wymmen, he doth shame vnto the ordre of knyghthode, and contrary vnto his othe, hit is pyte that he lyueth. But fayr damoysel ye shal ryde on afore your self, and I wylle kepe my self in couerte. And yf that he trouble yow or distresse yow, I shalle be your rescowe and lerne hym to be rulèd as a knyghte. Soo the mayde rode on by the way a soft ambelynge paas. And within a whyle cam oute that knyght on horsbak oute of the woode, and his page with hym, & there he put the damoysel from her hors, and thenne she cryed. With that came launcelot as fast as he myghte tyl he came to that knyght, sayenge, O thou fals knyght and traytour vnto knyghthode, who dyd lerne the to dystresse ladyes and gentylwymmen. Whanne the knyghte

sawe syre launcelot thus rebukynge hym, he ansuerd not, but drewe his swerd and rode vnto syre launcelot, and syre laũcelot threwe his spere fro hym, and drewe oute his swerd, and strake hym suche a buffet on the helmet that he clafe his hede and neck vnto the throte.

Now hast thou thy payement that long thou hast deserued, that is trouthe sayd the damoysel. For lyke as syr Turquyne watched to destroye knyghtes, soo dyde this knyght attende to destroye and dystresse ladyes damoysels and gentylwymmen, & his name was syre Perys de foreyst saueage. Now damoysel sayde syre launcelot wylle ye ony more seruyse of me. Nay syre she sayd at this tyme, but almyghty Jhesu preserue you where someuer ye ryde or goo, for the curteyst knyghte thou arte and mekest vnto all ladyes and gentylwymmen that now lyueth. But one thyng syre knyghte me thynketh ye lacke, ye that are a knyghte wyueles that ye wyl not loue some mayden or gentylwoman, for I coude neuer here say that euer ye loued ony of no maner degree and that is grete pyte, but hit is noysed that ye loue quene Gueneuer, and that she hath ordeyned by enchauntement that ye shal neuer loue none other, but her, ne none other damoysel ne lady shall reioyse you. Wherfor many in this land of hyghe estate and lowe make grete sorowe. Fayre damoysel sayd syr launcelot I maye not warne peple to speke of me what it pleaseth hem. But for to be a wedded man, I thynke hit not, for thenne I must couche with her, and leue armes and turnementys, batayls, and aduentures. And as for to say for to take my plesaunce with peramours that wylle I refuse in pryncypal for drede of god. For knyghtes that ben auenturous or lecherous shal not be happy ne fortunate vnto the werrys, for outher they shalle be ouercome with a symplyer knyghte than they be hem self. Outher els they shal by vnhappy and her cursydnes slee better men than they ben hem self. And soo who that vseth peramours shalle be vnhappy, and all thyng is vnhappy that is aboute hem. And soo syre Launcelot and she departed. And thenne he rode in a depe forest two dayes and more, and had strayte lodgynge. Soo on the thyrdde day he rode ouer a longe brydge, and there starte vpon hym sodenly a passynge foule chorle, and he smote his hors on the nose that he torned aboute, & asked hym why he rode ouer that brydge withoute his lycence. Why

shold I not ryde this way sayd syr launcelot, I may not ryde besyde, thou shalt not chese sayd the chorle and lasshyd at hym with a grete clubbe shod with yron. Thenne syre laũcelot drewe his suerd and put the stroke abak, and clafe his hede vnto the pappys. At the ende of the brydge was a fayre village, & al the people men and wymmen cryed on syre launcelot, and sayd, A wers dede dydest thou neuer for thy self, for thou hast slayn the chyef porter of oure castel. syr laũcelot lete them say what they wold. And streyghte he wente in to the castel. And whanne he cam in to the castel he alyghte, and teyed his hors to a rynge on the walle. And there he sawe a fayre grene courte, and thyder he dressyd hym. For there hym thought was a fayre place to fyghte in. Soo he loked aboute, and sawe moche peple in dores and wyndowes that sayd fayr knyghte thou arte vnhappy.

Capitulum xi.

Anone with al cam there vpon hym two grete gyaunts wel armed al sauf the hedes with two horryble clubbes in theyr handes. Syre Launcelot put his sheld afore hym and put the stroke aweye of the one gyaunt, and with his swerd he clafe his hede a sondre. Whan his felaw sawe that, he ran awey as he were wood, for fere of the horryble strokes, & laũcelot after hym with al his myzt & smote hym on the sholder, and clafe hym to the nauel. Thenne syre launcelot went in to the halle, and there came afore hym thre score ladyes and damoysels, and all kneled vnto hym, and thanked god & hym of their delyueraunce. For syre sayd they, the mooste party of vs haue ben here this seuen yere their prysoners, and we haue worched al maner of sylke werkes for oure mete, and we are al grete gentylwymmen borne, and blessyd be the tyme knyzte that euer thou be borne. For thou hast done the moost worship that euer dyd knyght in this world, that wyl we bere recorde and we al pray you to telle vs your name, that we may telle our frendes who delyuerd vs oute of pryson. Fayre damoysel he sayd, my name is syre launcelot du lake. A syre sayde they al, wel mayst thou be he, for els saue your

self, as we demed, there myghte neuer knyght haue the better of these two gyaunts, for many fayre knyghtes haue assayed hit, and here haue ended, and many tymes haue we wysshed after yow, and these two gyaunts dredde neuer knyghte but you. Now maye ye saye sayd syr launcelot vnto youre frendes how & who hath delyuerd you, and grete them al from me, and yf that I come in ony of your marches, shewe me suche chere as ye haue cause and what tresour that there in this castel is I gyue it you for a reward for your greuaunce. And the lorde that is owner of this castel I wold he receyued it as is ryght. Fayre syre saide they, the name of this castel is Tyntygayl, & a duke oughte it somtyme that had wedded fair Igrayn, & after wedded her Utherpendragon, & gate on her Arthur. Wel saide sir launcelot I vnderstande to whome this castel longeth, and soo he departed from them, and bytaughte hem vnto god. And thenne he mounted vpon his hors & rode in to many straunge & wyld countreyes and thorou many waters and valeyes and euyl was he lodged. And at the laste by fortune hym happend ageynst a nyghte to come to a fayr courtelage, & therin he fond an old gentylwoman that lodged hym with good wyl, and there he had good chere for hym and his hors. And whan tyme was his oost brought hym in to a fayre garet ouer the gate to his bedde. There syre Launcelot vnarmed hym & sette hys harneys by hym, and wente to bed, & anone he felle on slepe. So soone after ther cam one on horsback, & knocked at the gate in grete haste, and whan syr launcelot herd this, he arose vp and loked oute at the wyndowe, & sawe by the mone lyghte thre knyghtes cam rydyng after that one man, and al thre lasshed on hym at ones with swerdes, & that one knyzt tourned on hem knyztly ageyne, and deffended hym. Truly saide syre launcelot yonder one knyzte shal I helpe, for it were shame for me to see thre knyztes on one. And yf he be slayne I am partener of his deth, & ther with he took his harneis, and went out at a wyndowe by a shete doune to the four knyztes, & thenne syr launcelot sayd on hyghe, torne you knyghtes vnto me and leue your fyghtyng with that knyght. And thenne they alle thre lefte syr kay, and torned vnto syr launcelot, and there beganne grete bataylle, for they alyghte al thre, and strake many grete strokes at syr launcelot, and

assayled hym on euery syde. Thenne syre kay dressid hym for to haue holpen syre Launcelot, nay syre sayd he I wylle none of your helpe, therfor as ye wylle haue my helpe, let me alone with hem. Syre kay for the pleasyre of the knyghte suffred hym for to doo hys wylle, and soo stode on syde. And thenne anon within vi strokes, syre launcelot had stryken hem to the erthe.

And thenne they al thre cryed syre knyghte we yelde vs vnto you as man of myght makeles. As to that said syr laũcelot I will not take youre yeldyng vnto me. But so that ye wylle yelde you vnto syr kay the Seneschal on that couenaunt I wyl saue your lyues and els not. Fayre knyghte sayd they that were we lothe to doo. For as for syr kay, we chaced hym hyder, and had ouercome hym had not ye ben, therfor to yelde vs vnto hym it were no reson. Wel as to that said laũcelot, auyse you wel, for ye may chese whether ye wyll dye or lyue, for and ye be yolden it shal be vnto syr kay. Fayre knyght thenne they sayd in sauynge of oure lyues we wylle doo as thou commaundys vs. Thenne shal ye sayd syre launcelot on whytsonday nexte comyng go vnto the courte of kynge Arthur, and there shal ye yelde you vnto quene Gueneuer, and put you al thre in her grace and mercy, and saye that sir kay sente you thyder to be her prysoners. Syre they said it shalle be done by the feythe of oure bodyes, and we ben lyuynge, and there they swore euery knyghte vpon his swerd. And so sir launcelot suffred hem soo to departe. And thenne sir launcelot knocked at the yate with the pomel of his swerd, and with that came his oost, and in they entred sir kay and he. Syre sayd his hoost I wende ye had ben in your bedde, so I was, sayd sire launcelot. But I arose and lepte oute atte my wyndowe for to helpe an old felawe of myne. And so whanne they came nyghe the lyghte, sir kay knewe wel that it was sir launcelot, and ther with he kneled doune and thanked hym of al his kyndenesse that he had holpen hym twyes from the deth. Syre he sayd I haue no thynge done but that me ought for to doo, and ye are welcome, and here shal ye repose yow and take your rest. Soo whan sir kay was vnarmed, he asked after mete, soo there was mete fette hym, and he ete strongly. And whan he hadde souped they went to theyr beddes and were lodged to gyders in one bedde. On the morne sir

launcelot arose erly, and lefte syre kay slepynge, and sir launcelot toke sire kayes armour and his shelde and armed hym, and so he wente to the stable, and toke his hors and toke his leue of his oost, and soo he departed. Thenne soone after arose syr kay and myssed sir launcelot. And thenne he aspyed that he had his armoure and his hors. Now by my feythe I knowe wel that he wylle greue some of the courte of kynge Arthur. For on hym knyghtes wylle be bolde, and deme that it is I, and that wyll begyle them. And by cause of his armoure and shelde I am sure I shal ryde in pees. And thenne soone after departed sir kay & thanked his hoost.

Capitulum xii.

Now torne we vnto syre launcelot that had ryden long in a grete forest, and at the last he came in to a lowe countray ful of fayre Ryuers and medowes. And afore hym he sawe a longe brydge, and thre pauelions stode theron of sylke and sendel of dyuers hewe. And withoute the pauelione henge thre whyte sheldes on truncheons of sperys, & grete longe sperys stode vpryght by the pauelions, and at euery pauelions dore stode thre fresshe squyers, and soo syre launcelot passed by them and spake no worde. Whan he was paste the thre knyghtes sayden hym that hit was the proud kay, he weneth no knyght soo good as he, and the contrary is oftyme preued. By my feythe sayd one of the knyghtes, his name was syre gaunter, I wylle ryde after hym, & assaye hym, for alle his pryde, and ye may beholde how that I spede. Soo this knyghte syre Gaunter armed hym, and henge his shelde vpon his sholder, and mounted vpon a grete hors, and gate his spere in his hand, and wallopt after syre launcelot, and whanne he came nyghe hym, he cryed Abyde thou proude knyght syr kay, for thou shalt not passe quyte. Soo syr launcelot torned hym, and eyther feutryd their speres, and came to gyders with alle theyr myghtes, and syre Gaunters spere brake, but syre launcelot smote hym doune hors and man, and whan syr gaunter was at the erthe, his bretheren sayd echone to other yonder knyght is not syre kay, for he is byggar than he. I dare laye my heede sayd syre Gylmere

yonder knyghte hath slayne syr kay and hath taken his hors and his harneis. Whether it be soo or no sayd syr Raynold the thyrd broder, lete vs now goo mounte vpon oure horses and rescowe oure broder sir Gaunter vpon payne of dethe. We alle shal haue werke ynouz to matche that knyght, for euer me semeth by his persone it is syre Launcelot, or syr Trystram, or syr Pelleas the good knyght. Thenne anon they toke theyr horses and ouertook syr launcelot, and syre gylmere put forth his spere, and ranne to sir launcelot, and syre launcelot smote hym doune that he lay in a swoune. Syre knyght sayd syr Raynold thou arte a strong man, and as I suppose thou hast slayne my two bretheren, for the whiche rasyth my herte sore ageynst the. And yf I myght with my worship I wold not haue a doo with yow but nedes I must take parte as they doo. And therfor knyghte he sayd, kepe thy self. And soo they hurtled to gyders with alle theyr myghtes, and al to sheuered bothe theyre speres. And thenne they drewe her swerdes and lasshyd to gyder egerly. Anone there with aroos syre Gaūter, and came vnto his broder syre gylmere, and bad hym aryse and helpe we oure broder syr Raynold that yonder merueyllously matched yonder good knyght. There with alle they lepte on theyr horses & hurtled vnto syre launcelot. And whanne he sawe them come, he smote a sore stroke vnto syr Raynold that he felle of his hors to the ground. And thenne he stroke to the other two bretheren, and at two strokes he strake them doune to the erthe. With that sir Raynold beganne to starte vp with his heede al blody, and came streyte vnto syre launcelot. Now late be sayd sir launcelot, I was not ferre from the whan thou were maade knyght sir Raynold, and also I knowe thou arte a good knyght, and lothe I were to slee the. Gramercy sayd syr raynold as for your goodnes. And I dare saye as for me and my bretheren we wyl not be lothe to yelde vs vnto yow, with that we knewe youre name, for wel we knowe ye are not sire kay. As for that be it as it be maye, for ye shal yelde yow vnto dame gweneuer, and loke that ye be with her on whytsonday and yelde you vnto her as prysoners, and saye that syre kay sente yow vnto her. thenne they swore hit shold be done, and so passed forthe sire launcelot, and echone of the bretheren halpe other as wel as they myght.

Capitulum xiii.

Soo sir launcelot rode in to a depe forest, and ther by in a slade, he sawe four knyghtes houyng vnder an oke, and they were of Arthurs courte, one was sir Sagramour le desyrus and Ector de marys, and sir Gawayn and sir Uwayne. Anone as these four knyghtes had aspyed sir Launcelot they wend by his armes it hadde ben sir kay. Now by my feythe sayd sir Sagramour, I wylle preue sir kayes myghte, & gate his spere in his hand, and came toward sir launcelot. Ther with sir launcelot was ware and knewe hym wel, and feutryd his spere ageynst hym, and smote syre Sagramore so sore that hors and man felle bothe to the erthe. Lo my felaus sayd he yonder ye may see what a buffet he hath, that knyzt is moche bygger than euer was syre kay. Now shal ye see what I may doo to hym. Soo syr Ector gate his spere in his hand and wallopte toward syre Laũcelot, and syre Launcelot smote hym thorou the shelde & sholder that man and hors went to the erthe, and euer his spere held. By my feythe sayd sir Uwayne yonder is a strong knyghte, and I am sure he hath slayne syr kay. And I see by his grete strengthe it wyll be hard to matche hym. And there with al syre Uwayne gate his spere in his hand and rode toward syre Launcelot, and syr launcelot knewe hym wel, and soo he mette hym on the playne, & gafe hym suche a buffette that he was astonyed, that longe he wyst not where he was. Now see I wel sayd syre gawayne I must encoũtre with that knyzt. Thenne he dressid he his sheld and gate a good spere in his hand, and syre launcelot knewe hym wel, and thenne they lete renne theyr horses with all theyr myghtes, and eyther knyght smote other in myddes of the shelde. But syre gawayns spere to brast, and syre launcelot charged so sore vpon hym that his hors reuersed vp so doune. And moche sorowe had syre gawayn to auoyde his hors, and so syre launcelot passed on a paas and smyled and said god gyue hym ioye that this spere made, for there came neuer a better in my hand. Thenne the four knyghtes wente echone to other and comforted eche other. What saye ye by this gest sayd syre Gawayne, that one spere hath feld vs al foure, we commaunde

hym vnto the deuyl they sayd al, for he is a man of grete myght. ye may wel saye it, sayd syre gawayne, that he is a man of myght, for I dare lay my hede it is syre Launcelot, I knowe it by his rydyng. Lete hym goo sayd syre Gawayn, for whan we come to the courte than shal we wete, and thenne had they moche sorowe to gete theyr horses ageyne.

Capitulum xiiii.

Now leue we there & speke of syr Launcelot that rode a grete whyle in a depe forest where he saw a black brachet sekyng in maner as it had ben in the feaute of an hurt dere. And ther with he rode after the brachet and he sawe lye on the ground a large feaute of blood. And thenne syre launcelot rode after. And euer the Brachet loked behynd her, and soo she wente thorou a grete mareyse, and euer syre launcelot folowed. And thenne was he ware of an old manoyr, and thyder ranne the brachet and soo ouer the brydge. Soo syre launcelot rode ouer that brydge that was old and feble, and whan he cam in myddes of a grete halle ther he sawe lye a dede knyght that was a semely man, and that brachet lycked his woundes, and there with al came oute a lady wepyng & wryngyng her handes. And thenne she sayd, O knyghte to moche sorowe hast thou broughte me. Why saye ye soo sayd syr launcelot, I dyd neuer this knyghte no harme, for hyther by feaute of blood this Brachet broughte me. And therfor fayre lady be not displeased with me, for I am ful sore agreued of your greuaunce. Truly syre she sayd I trowe hit be not ye that hath slayne my husband, for he that dyd that dede is sore wounded, & he is neuer lyckly to recouer, that shal I ensure hym. What was your husbandes name sayd syre laūcelot. Syr sayd she, his name was called syre Gylbert the bastard, one of the best knyghtes of the world, and he that hath slayne hym I knowe not his name. Now god sende you better comforte sayd syre launcelot, and soo he departed and wente in to the forest ageyne, and there he met with a damoysel, the whiche knewe hym wel, and she sayd on loude wel be ye fond my lord.

And now I requyre the on thy knyghthode helpe my brother that is sore wounded, and neuer stynteth bledyng, for this day he fought with syre gylbert the bastard & slewe hym in playn bataylle, and there was my broder sore wounded, and there is a lady a sorceresse that duelleth in a castel here besyde, and this day she told me, my broders woundes shold neuer be hole tyl I coude fynde a knyght wold goo in to the chappel peryllous, & ther he shold fynde a swerd and a blody clothe that the wounded knyght was lapped in, and a pyece of that clothe & swerd shold hele my broders woundes so that his woundes were serched with the swerde and the clothe. This is a merueyllous thynge sayd syre launcelot, but what is your broders name. Syre she sayd, his name was syre Melyot de logurs. that me repenteth said syre launcelott, for he is a felawe of the table round, and to his helpe I wylle doo my power. Thenne syre sayd she, folowe euen this hyhe waye, and it wyl brynge you vnto the chappel peryllous. And here I shalle abyde tyl god send you here ageyne, and but you spede I knowe no knyzte lyuynge that may encheue that aduenture.

Capitulum xv.

Ryght soo syr Launcelot departed. And whan he cam vnto the chappel peryllous, he alyghte doune, and teyed his hors vnto a lytyl gate, and as soone as he was within the chirche yard, he sawe on the frount of the chappel many fayre ryche sheldes torned vp so doune, and many of the sheldes syre launcelot had sene knyghtes bere byfore hand. Wyth that he sawe by hym there stande a xxx greete knyghtes more by a yarde than ony man that euer he had sene, and all tho grened and gnasted at syre launcelot. And whan he sawe theyr countenaunce he dred hym sore, and soo putte his shelde afore hym, and toke his swerd redy in his hand redy vnto bataylle, and they were al armed in black harneis redy with her sheldes and her swerdes drawen. And whan syr Launcelot wold haue gone thorou oute them, they scateryd on euery syde of hym, and gaf hym the way, and ther with he waxed al bold, and entred in to the chappel,

and thenne he sawe no lyght, but a dymme lamp brennynge, and thenne was he ware of a corps hylled with a clothe of sylke. Thenne syre Launcelot stouped doune, and cutte a pyece awey of that clothe, and thenne it ferd vnder hym as the erthe had quaked a lytel. ther with al he feryd. And thenne he sawe a fayre swerd lye by the dede knyghte, and that he gate in his hand and hyed hym oute of the chapel. Anone as euer he was in the chappel yarde, alle the knyghtes spak to hym with a grymly voys, and sayd knyghte syr launcelot leye that swerd from the or ellys thou shalt dye. Whether that I lyue or dye sayd syr launcelot with noo grete word gete ye hit ageyne, therfor fyghte for it and ye lyst. Thenne ryght soo he passed thorou out them, and by yonde the chappel yarde ther mette hym a fayre damoysel & sayd syr launcelot leue that swerd behynde the, or thou wilt dye for it. I leue it not sayd syr launcelot for no treatys. No sayd she and thou dydest loue that swerd, quene gweneuer shold thou neuer see, thenne were I a foole and I wold leue this swerd sayd launcelot. Now gentyl knyghte sayde the damoysel, I requyre the to kysse me but ones. Nay sayd syr launcelot that god me forbede. Wel syr sayd she, and thou haddest kyssed me, thy lyf dayes had ben done, but now allas she said I haue loste al my labour, for I ordeyned this chappel for thy sake, and for syre gawayne. And ones I had syr Gawayne within me, and at that tyme he foughte with that knyghte that lyeth there dede in yonder chappel syre Gylbert the bastard. and at that tyme he smote the lyfte hand of of sir Gylbert the bastard. And syre Launcelot now I telle the, I haue loued the this seuen yere, but there may no woman haue thy loue but quene Gweneuer. But sythen I maye not reioyce the to haue thy body on lyue I had kepte no more ioye in this world, but to haue thy body dede. Thenne wold I haue baumed hit and serued hit, and soo haue kepte it my lyfe dayes, and dayly I shold haue clypped the, and kyssed the in despyte of Quene Gweneuer. ye saye wel sayd syr launcelot, Jhesu preserue me from your subtyle craftes. And ther with al he took his hors and soo departed from her. And as the book sayth whan syr launcelot was departed she took suche sorou that she dyed within a fourten nyghte, and her name was Hellawes the sorceresse lady of the castel Nygramous.

Anone syre launcelot mette with the damoysel syre Melyotis syster. And whan she sawe hym she clapped her handes, and wepte for ioye. And thenne they rode vnto a castel there by where lay syr Melyot. And anone as syre launcelot sawe hym, he knewe hym, but he was passynge pale as the erthe for bledyng. Whan syre Melyot sawe syre launcelot he kneled vpon his knees and cryed on hyghe, O lord syr launcelot helpe me. Anone syre launcelot lepte vnto hym and touched his woundes with syr Gylbertes swerde. And thenne he wyped his woundes with a part of the blody clothe that sir gylbert was wrapped in, and anon an holer man in his lyf was he neuer. And thenne ther was grete ioye bytwene hem, and they made syr launcelot alle the chere that they myghte, and soo on the morne syre launcelot toke his leue, and badde syre Melyot hye hym to the courté of my lord Arthur, for it draweth nyhe to the feest of pentecoste, and there by the grace of god ye shal fynde me, and therwith they departed.

Capitulum xvi.

And soo syre Launcelot rode thorou many straunge countreyes ouer marys and valeyes tyl by fortune he came to a fayre castel, and as he paste beyonde the castel, hym thought he herde two bellys rynge. And thenne was he ware of a Faucon came fleynge ouer his hede toward an hyghe elme, and longe lunys aboute her feet, and she flewe vnto the elme to take her perche, the lunys ouer cast aboute a bough. And whanne she wold haue taken her flyghte, she henge by the legges fast, and syre launcelot sawe how he henge, and byheld the fayre faucon perygot, & he was sory for her. The meane whyle came a lady oute of the castel and cryed on hyghe O launcelot launcelot as thou arte floure of alle knyghtes helpe me to gete my hauke, for and my hauke be lost, my lord wyl destroye me, for I kepte the hauke and she slypped from me, and yf my lord my husband wete hit, he is soo hasty that he wyll slee me. What is your lordes name sayd sir Launcelot, sir she said his name is sire Phelot a knyghte that longeth vnto the kynge of Northgalys. wel fayre lady syn that

ye knowe my name and requyre me of knyghthode to helpe yow I wylle doo what I may to gete your hauke, and yet god knoweth I am an ylle clymber and the tree is passynge hyghe, and fewe bowes to helpe me with alle. And ther with sir launcelot alyzte and teyed his hors to the same tree, and prayd the lady to vnarme hym. And soo whan he was vnarmed, he put of alle his clothes vnto his sherte and breche, and with myghte & force he clamme vp to the faucon, and teyed the lunys to a grete rotten boyshe, and threwe the hauke doune and it with alle. Anone the lady gate the hauke in her hand, and there with al came oute syre phelot oute of the greuys sodenly, that was her husband al armed, and with his naked swerd in his hand and sayd O knyghte launcelot now haue I fond the as I wold and stode at the bole of the tree to slee hym. A lady sayd syre Launcelot why haue ye bytrayed me. She hath done sayd syre Phelot but as I commaunded her, and therfor ther nys none other boote but thyne houre is come that thou muste dye. That were shame vnto the sayd syr launcelot thou an armed knyghte to slee a naked man by treason, thou getest none other grace sayd syre phelot and therfor helpe thy self and thou canst. Truly sayde syre launcelot that shal be thy shame, but syn thou wylt doo none other, take myn harneys with the and hange my swerde vpon a bough that I maye gete hit, & thenne doo thy best to slee me and thou canst. Nay nay said sir Phelot, for I knowe the better than thou wenest, therfor thow getest no wepen and I may kepe you ther fro. Allas said sir launcelot that euer a knyghte shold dye wepenles. And ther with he wayted aboue hym and vnder hym, and ouer his hede he sawe a rownsepyk a bygge bough leueles, and ther with he brake it of by the body. And thenne he came lower & awayted how his owne hors stode, and sodenly he lepte on the ferther syde of the hors froward the knyghte. And thenne sir phelot lasshed at hym egerly wenynge to haue slayne hym. But syr Launcelot putte aweye the stroke with the rounsepyk, and ther with he smote hym on the one syde of the hede that he felle doune in a swoune to the ground. Soo thenne syre launcelot took his swerd oute of his hand and stroke his neck fro the body. Thenne cryed the lady, Allas why hast thou slayne my husband, I am not causer sayd syre launcelot, for with

falshede ye wold haue had slayne me with treson, and now it is fallen on you bothe. And thenne she souned as though she wold dye. And ther with al syre launcelot gate al his armour as wel as he myght, and put hit vpon hym for drede of more resorte, for he dredde that the knyztes castel was soo nygh. And soo as soone as he myght he took his hors and departed and thanked god that he had escaped that aduenture.

Capitulum xvii.

Soo syre launcelot rode many wylde wayes thorou out mareys and many wylde wayes. And as he rode in a valey he sawe a knyght chacynge a lady with a naked swerd to haue slayn her. And by fortune as this knyzte shold haue slayne thys lady she cryed on syr Launcelot and prayd hym to rescowe her. Whan syre launcelot sawe that meschyef, he took his hors and rode bytwene them, sayeng knyzte fy for shame, why wolt thou slee this lady, thou dost shame vnto the and alle knyghtes. What haste thou to doo betwyx me & my wyf, sayd the knyght. I wylle slee her maugre thy hede, that shalle ye not sayd syr launcelot, for rather we two wylle haue adoo to gyders. Syre Launcelot sayd the knyght thow doest not thy part, for this lady hath bytrayed me, hit is not so sayd the lady, truly he sayth wronge on me. And for by cause I loue and cherysshe my cosyn germayne, he is jalous betwixe hym and me. And as I shalle ansuer to god there was neuer synne betwyxe vs. But sir sayd the lady as thou arte called the worshipfullest knyghte of the world I requyre the of true knyzthode kepe me and saue me. For what someuer ye saye he wyl slee me, for he is withoute mercy, haue ye no doubte sayd launcelot it shal not lye in his power. Syr sayd the knyghte in your syghte I wyl be ruled as ye wylle haue me. And soo sir launcelot rode on the one syde and she on the other, he had not ryden but a whyle, but the knyghte badde sir Launcelot torne hym and loke behynde hym, and sayde syre yonder come men of armes after vs rydynge. And soo sir launcelot torned hym and thoughte no treason, and there wyth was the knyghte and the lady on one syde,

& sodenly he swapped of his ladyes hede. And whan syr Launcelot hadde aspyed hym what he had done, he sayd and called hym traytour thou hast shamed me for euer, and sodenly sir launcelot alyzte of his hors and pulled oute hys swerd to slee hym, and there with al he felle flat to the erthe, and grypped sir launcelot by the thyes and cryed mercy. Fy on the sayd sir launcelot thow shameful knyght thou mayst haue no mercy, and therfor aryse and fyghte with me. nay sayde the knyghte I wyl neuer aryse tyl ye graunte me mercy. Now wyl I profer the fayr said launcelot, I wyl vnarme me vnto my sherte, and I wylle haue nothyng vpon me, but my sherte and my swerd and my hand. And yf thou canst slee me, quyte be thou for euer, nay sir said Pedyuere that wille I neuer. wel said sir Launcelott take this lady and the hede, and bere it vpon the, and here shalt thou swere vpon my swerd to bere it alweyes vpon thy back and neuer to reste tyl thou come to quene Gueneuer. Syre sayd he that wylle I doo by the feithe of my body. Now said launcelot telle me what is your name, sir my name is Pedyuere. In a shameful houre were thou borne said launcelot. Soo Pedyuere departed with the dede lady and the hede, and fond the quene with kynge Arthur at Wynchester, and there he told alle the trouthe. Syre knyzt said the quene this is an horryble dede and a shameful, and a grete rebuke vnto sire launcelott. But not withstondynge his worship is not knowen in many dyuerse countreyes, but this shalle I gyue you in penaunce, make ye as goud skyfte as ye can ye shal bere this lady with you on horsbak vnto the pope of Rome, and of hym receyue your penaunce for your foule dedes, and ye shalle neuer reste one nyghte there as ye doo another, and ye goo to ony bedde the dede body shal lye with you. this othe, there he made and soo departed. And as it telleth in the frensshe book, whan he cam to Rome, the pope badde hym goo ageyne vnto quene Gueneuer and in Rome was his lady beryed by the popes commaundement. And after this sir Pedyuere felle to grete goodnesse, & was an holy man and an heremyte.

Capitulum xviii.

Now torne we vnto sir launcelot du lake that came home two dayes afore the feest of Pentecost, and the kyng and alle the courte were passynge fayne of his comynge. And whanne sire Gawayne, sir Uwayne, sire Sagramore, sir Ector de marys sawe sire Launcelot in Kayes armour, thenne they wist wel it was he that smote hem doune al with one spere. Thenne there was laughyng and smylyng amonge them, and euer now and now came alle the Knyghtes home that sir Turquyn hadde prysoners and they alle honoured and worshipped syre launcelot. Whanne sire Gaherys herd them speke, he said, I sawe alle the bataille from the begynnyng to the endynge, and there he told kyng Arthur alle how it was and how syre Turquyn was the strongest knyghte that euer he sawe excepte syre launcelot, there were many knyghtes bare hym record nyghe thre score. Thenne sire kay told the kynge, how syr launcelot had rescowed hym whan he shold haue ben slayne, and how he made the knyghtes yelde hem to me, and not to hym. And there they were al thre, and bare record, and by Jhesu said syr kay by cause syr launcelot took my harneis and lefte me his, I rode in good pees, and no man wold haue adoo with me. Anone there with alle ther came the thre knyghtes that fought with syre launcelot at the longe brydge. And there they yelded hem vnto syr kay, and syr kay forsoke hem and said he foughte neuer with hem, but I shall ease your herte said sir kay, yonder is syr launcelot that ouercam you. Whan they wyst that, they were glad. And thenne syr Melyot de logrys came home, and told the kynge how syr launcelot had saued hym fro the dethe, and all his dedes were knowen how foure quenes sorceresses had hym in pryson, and how he was delyuerd by kynge Bagdemagus doughter. Also there were told alle the grete dedes of armes that syr launcelot dyd betwixe the two kynges, that is for to saye the kynge of northgalys and kynge Bagdemagus. Alle the trouthe syr Gahalantyne dyd telle, and syre Mador de la porte and syre Mordred, for they were at that same turnement. Thenne cam in the lady that knewe

syr launcelot whan that he wounded syr Bellyus at the pauelione. And there atte request of syr laũcelot syr Bellyus was made knyghte of the round table.

And soo at that tyme sir launcelot had the grettest name of ony knyghte of the world, and most he was honoured of hyhe and lowe.

Explicit the noble tale of syr Launcelot du lake whiche is the vj book. Here folowyth the tale of syr Gareth of Orkeney that was called Beaumayns by syr kay, and is the seuenth book.

Capitulum primum.

HAN Arthur held his round table moost plenour, it fortuned that he commaunded that the hyhe feest of Pentecost shold be holden at a cyte and a Castel the whiche in tho dayes was called kynke kenadonne vpon the sondes that marched nyghe walys. Soo euer the kyng hadde a custom that at the feest of Pentecost in especyal afore other feestes in the yere he wold not goo that daye to mete vntyl he had herd or sene of a grete merueylle. And for that custome alle maner of straunge aduentures came before Arthur as at that feest before alle other feestes. And soo sire Gawayne a lytyl to fore none of the daye of Pentecost aspyed att a wyndowe thre men vpon horsbak and a dwarf on foote, and soo the thre men alighte and the dwarf kepte their horses, and one of the thre men was hyher than the other tweyne by a foote and an half. Thenne sir Gawayne wente vnto the kynge and sayd, sire go to your mete, for here at the hande comen straunge aduentures. So Arthur wente vnto his mete with many other kynges. And there were all the

knyghtes of the round table only tho that were prysoners or slayn at a recountre, thenne at the hyhe feest euermore they shold be fulfilled the hole nombre of an C and fyfty, for thenne was the round table fully complisshed. Ryght soo cam in to the halle two men wel bisene and rychely, and vpon their sholders there lened the goodlyest yong man & the fairest that euer they al sawe, & he was large and long and brode in the sholders & wel vysaged, and the fayrest and the largest handed that euer man sawe, but he ferd as though he myght not goo nor bere hym self, but yf he lened vpon their sholders. Anon as Arthur sawe hym there was made pees & rome, & ryght so they yede with hym vnto the hyghe deyse without sayeng of ony wordes. Thenne this moche yong man pulled hym a bak and easily stretched vp streyghte, sayeng kynge Arthur god you blesse and al your fair felauship, and in especial the felauship of the table rounde. And for thys cause I am come hyder to praye you and requyre you to gyue me thre yeftes, and they shalle not be vnresonably asked, but that ye may worshipfully and honorably graunte hem me, and to you no grete hurte nor losse. And the fyrst done and gyfte I wil aske now, and the other two yeftes I wylle aske this daye twelue moneth, where someuer ye hold your hyghe feest. Now aske sayd Arthur, and ye shalle haue your askyng.

Now syre this is my petycyon for thys feest, that ye wylle gyue me mete and drynke suffycyauntly for this twelue moneth, and at that day I wylle aske myn other two yeftes.

My fayr sone sayd Arthur aske better I counceille the for this is but a symple askynge, for my herte geueth me to the gretely that thou arte come of men of worshyp, and gretely my consayte fayleth me, but thou shalt preue a man of ryghte grete worship. Syre he sayd, ther of be as it be may I haue asked that I wylle aske. Wel sayd the kynge ye shal haue mete & drynke ynouz, I neuer deffended y^t none, nother my frende ne my foo. But what is thy name I wold wete, I can not telle you sayd he, that is merueylle sayd the kynge, that thou knowest not thy name, and thou arte the goodlyest yong man one that euer I sawe. Thenne the kyng betook hym to sir kay the steward, and charged hym that he shold gyue hym of al maner of metes and drynkes of the best, and also that

he hadde al maner of fyndynge as though he were a lordes sone. that shal lytel nede sayd syr kay to doo suche cost vpon hym. For I dare vndertake he is a vylayne borne, and neuer will make man, for and he had come of gentylmen he wold haue axed of you hors and armour, but suche as he is so he asketh. And sythen he hath no name, I shall yeue hym a name that shal be Beaumayns that is fayre handes, and in to the kechen I shalle brynge hym, and there he shalle haue fatte broweys euery day yt he shall be as fatte by the twelue monethes ende as a porke hog. ryght soo the two men departed and belefte hym to syr kay, that scorned hym and mocked hym.

Ca. ii.

THERE at was sir Gawayn wroth, & in especyal sir launcelot bad sir kay leue his mockyng, for I dare laye my hede he shall preue a man of grete worship. lete be, said sir kay, it may not be by no reason, for as he is, so he hath asked. Beware said syre Launcelot, so ye gafe the good knyzt Brewnor syre Dynadamys broder a name, and ye called hym la cote male tayle, and that tourned you to anger after ward. As for that sayd syr kay this shall neuer preue none suche. For syr Brewnor desyred euer worship and thys desyreth breed & drynke, & brothe, vpon payne of my lyf he was fostred vp in some abbay, and how someuer it was they fayled mete and drynke, and soo hyther he is come for his sustenaunce. And soo syre kay badde gete hym a place and sytte doune to mete, soo Beaumayns wente to the halle dore, and sette hym doune amonge boyes and laddys, & there he ete sadly. And thenne syre launcelot after mete badde hym come to his chamber. And there he shold haue mete and drynke ynough. And soo dyd syre Gawayne, but he reffused hem al, he wold doo none other, but as syr kay commaunded hym for no profer. But as touchynge syre Gawayn he hadde reson to profer hym lodgyng mete and drynke, for that profer came of his blood, for he was nere kynne to hym than he wyst. But that as syre launcelot dyd was of his grete gentylnes and curtosye. Soo thus he

was putte in to the kechyn and laye nyghtly as the boyes of the kechen dyd. And soo he endured alle that twelue moneth, and neuer displeasyd man nor chylde, but alweyes he was meke & mylde. But euer whanne that he sawe ony Justynge of knyghtes, that wold he see and he myght. And euer syre launcelot wold gyue hym gold to spende and clothes, and soo dyd syre Gawayne, and where there were ony maystryes done, there atte wold he be, and there myghte none cast barre nor stone to hym by two yerdys. Thenne wold syre kay saye how lyketh yow my boye of the kechyn, soo it past on tyl the feest of Whytsontyde. And at that tyme the kynge helde hit att Carlyon in the moost royallest wyse that myghte be, lyke as he dyd yerly.

But the Kynge wold no mete ete vpon the Whytsonday vntyl he herd some aduentures. Thenne cam ther a squyer to the Kyng, and said, syre ye maye goo to your mete, for here cometh a damoysel with somme straunge aduentures. thenne was the Kynge gladde and sette hym doune. Ryghte soo ther came a damoysel in to the halle and salewed the Kynge and prayd hym of socour, for whome sayd the Kynge, what is the aduenture. Syre she sayd I haue a lady of grete worship and renomme, and she is byseged with a tyraunte so that she may not oute of her castel. And by cause here are callyd the noblest knyghtes of the world, I come to you to praye you of socour. What heteth your lady and where dwelleth she, & who is he, & what is his name that hath byseged her. syre kyng she saide, as for my ladyes name that shall not ye knowe for me as at this tyme, but I lete you wete she is a lady of grete worship and of grete landes. And as for the tyraunt that bysyegeth her and destroyeth her landes he is called the rede knyght of the reed laundes. I knowe hym not sayd the kynge. Syre said syre Gawayne, I knowe hym wel for he is one of the perilloust knyghtes of the world, men saye that he hath seuen mennys strengthe, and from hym I escaped ones ful hard, with my lyf. Fayre damoysel sayd the kynge there ben knyztes here wolde doo her power for to rescowe your lady, but by cause ye wylle not telle her name nor where she dwelleth, therfor none of my knyghtes that here be now shal goo with yow by my wylle, thenne must I speke further sayd the damoysel.

Capitulum iii.

WYTH these wordes came before the kynge Beaumayns whyle the damoysel was ther, & thus he said syr Kyng god thanke you I haue ben this xii monethe in your kechyn and haue hadde my ful sustenaũce and now I will aske my two yeftes that ben behynde. Aske vpon my peryl said the kynge. Syre this shal be my two gyftes, fyrst that ye wil graunte me to haue this aduenture of the damoysel, for hit belongeth vnto me, thou shalt haue hit sayd the kyng I graunte it the, thenne syr this is the other yeft, that ye shal bydde Launcelot du lake to make me knyzt for of hym I wil be made knyght and els of none. And whanne I am paste I praye yow lete hym ryde after me and make me Knyght, whan I requyre hym. Al this shal be done sayd the Kynge. Fy on the sayde the damoysel, shalle I haue none but one that is your kechyn page, thenne was she wrothe and toke her hors and departed.

And with that there cam one to Beaumayns and told hym his hors and armour was come for hym, and there was the dwarf come with all thyng that hym neded in the rychest maner, ther at al the court had moche merueill fro whens cam al y^{t} gere. Soo whanne he was armed there was none but fewe soo goodely a man as he was, and ryght soo as he came in to the halle and took his leue of kyng Arthur & sir Gawayn & syr launcelot, and prayed that he wolde hyhe after hym, and soo departed and rode after the damoysel.

Capitulum iiii.

BUT there wente many after to behold how wel he was horsed and trapped in clothe of gold, but he had neyther shelde nor spere. Thenne syr kay sayd al open in the halle I wylle ryde after my boye in the kechyn to wete, whether he wylle knowe me for his better. Said syr launcelot and sir gawayn yet abyde at home. So syr kay made hym redy and took his hors and his spere and rode after hym. And ryghte as Beumayns ouertook the damoysel, ryghte soo cam syre

kay & sayd Beumayns what syre knowe ye not me. Thenne he torned his hors, and knewe hit was sir kay, that had done hym alle the despyte as ye haue herde afore, ye sayd beumayns I knowe yow for an vngentyl knyghte of the courte, and therfore beware of me. There with syre kay putte his spere in the reyste, and ranne streyghte vpon hym, and beaumayns cam as fast vpon hym with his swerd in his hand, and soo he putte awey his spere with his swerd and with a foyne thrested hym thorou the syde, that syr kay felle doune as he had ben dede, & he alyght doune and took sir kayes shelde and his spere, and starte vpon his owne hors and rode his waye. Al that sawe syr launcelot and soo dyd the damoysel. And thenne he badde his dwarf starte vpon sir kayes hors, and soo he dyd. by that syre Launcelot was come, thenne he profered sir laũcelot to Juste, and eyther made hem redy, and they came to gyder soo fyersly that eyther bare doune other to the erthe, and sore were they brysed. Thenne sir launcelot arose and halpe hym fro his hors. And thenne beaumayns threwe his sheld from hym, and profered to fyghte with sir launcelot on foote, and soo they rasshed to gyders lyke borys tracynge, racynge and foynynge to the mountenaunce of an houre, and syre launcelot felte hym soo bygge that he merueylled of his strengthe, for he fought more lyker a gyaunt then a knyght, and that his fyghtynge was durable and passynge perillous. For syr launcelot had so moche adoo with hym that he dred hym self to be shamed, and sayd Beumayns fyghte not so sore, youre quarel and myn is not soo grete but we may leue of. Truly that is trouthe sayd Beumayns, but it doth me good to fele your myght, and yet my lord I shewed not the vtteraunce.

Capitulum quintum.

In goddes name sayd syr launcelot, for I promyse you by the feythe of my body I had as moche to doo as I myght to saue my self fro you vnshamed, and therfore haue ye no doubte of none erthely knyghte. Hope ye so that I maye ony whyle stand a proued knyght. sayd Beaumayns, ye sayd Launcelot, doo as ye haue done,

and I shal be your waraunt. Thenne I praye you sayd Beaumayns yeue me the ordre of knyghthode, thenne must ye telle me your name seyd launcelot, and of what kynne ye be borne. Syr soo that ye wylle not discouer me I shal sayd Beaumayns, nay sayd syre laūcelot, and that I promyse yow by the feithe of my body, vntyl hit be openly knowen. Thenne syr he sayd my name is Gareth and broder vnto syr Gawayn of fader and moder. A syr said Launcelot I am more gladder of you than I was. For euer me thouzte ye shold be of grete blood, and that ye cam not to the courte neyther for mete ne for drynke. And thenne sire Launcelot gaf hym thordre of knyzthode, and thenne sire Gareth prayd hym for to departe and lete hym goo. Soo syre launcelot departed from hym and came to syre kay and maade hym to be born home vpon his shelde, and so he was helyd hard with the lyf, and al men scorned syr kay, and in especyal sir Gawayne and syre launcelot sayd it was not his parte to rebuke no yonge man, for ful lytel knewe he of what byrth he is comen, and for what cause he came to this courte, and soo we leue syr kay and torne we vnto Beaumayns. Whanne he had ouertaken the damoysel, anone she sayd what dost thow here, thou stynkest al of the kechyn, thy clothes ben bawdy of the greece and talowe that thou gaynest in kyng Arthurs kechyn, wenest thou sayd she that I alowe the for yonder knyzt that thou kyllest. Nay truly, for thou slewest hym vnhappely and cowardly, therfor torne ageyn bawdy kechyn page, I knowe the wel, for syre kay named the Beaumayns. What arte thou but a luske and a torner of broches and a ladyl wessher. Damoysel sayd Beaumayns saye to me what ye wylle, I wylle not goo from you what someuer ye say, for I haue vndertake to kynge Arthur for to acheue your aduenture, and so shal I fynysshe it to the ende, eyther I shal dye therfore. Fy on the kechyn knaue wolt thou fynysshe myn aduenture, thou shalt anone be met with al, that thou woldest not for alle the brothe that euer thou soupest ones loke hym in the face. I shal assaye sayd Beaumayns. Soo thus as they rode in the woode, ther came a man fleynge al that euer he myghte. Whether wolt thou sayd Beaumayns. O lord he said, helpe me, for here by in a slade are syxe theues that haue taken my lord and bounde hym, soo I am aferd lest they wyl slee hym. Brynge

me thyder said Beaumayns, and soo they rode to gyders vntyl they came there as was the knyghte bounden, and thenne he rode vnto hem, and strake one vnto the dethe, and thenne an other, and at the thyrd stroke he slewe the thyrdde theef, and thenne the other thre fledde. And he rode after hem, and he ouertook hem, and thenne tho thre theues tourned ageyne and assayled Beaumayns hard, but at the last he slewe them, & retorned and vnbounde the knyghte. And the knyght thanked hym, and prayd hym to ryde with hym to his castel there a lytel besyde, and he shold worshipfully rewarde hym for his good dedes. Syr sayd Beaumayns I wille no reward haue, I was this day made knyghte of noble syr launcelot, and therfor I wylle no reward haue, but god rewarde me. And also I must folowe this damoysel. And whan he came nyghe her she bad hym ryde fro her, for thou smellyst al of the kechyn. Wenest thou that I haue joye of the, for al this dede that thou hast done nys but myshappen the. But thou shalt see a syghte shal make the torne ageyne and that lyghtly. Thenne the same knyght whiche was rescowed of the theues rode after that damoysel and prayed her to lodge with hym alle that nyghte. And by cause it was nere nyght, the damoysel rode with hym to his castel, and there they had grete chere, and at souper the knyght sat syr Beumayns afore the damoisel. Fy fy said she syr knyghte ye are vncurtoys to sette a kechyn page afore me hym bysemeth better to stycke a swyne than to sytte afore a damoysel of hyhe parage, thenne the knyght was ashamed atte her wordes, and took hym vp, and sette hym at a syde bord, and sette hym self afore hym, and soo al that nyght they had good chere and mery reste.

Capitulum sextum.

And on the morne the damoisel & he took their leue & thanked the knyght, and soo departed, and rode on her way, vntyl they came to a grete forest. And there was a grete ryuer and but one passage, and ther were redy two knyghtes on the ferther syde to lette them the passage, What saist thou sayd the damoysel, wylte thou matche yonder knyghtes or torne ageyne. Nay sayd syr Beaumayns I wyl not torne

ageyn and they were syxe mo. And ther with al he rasshyd in to the water, and in myddes of the water eyther brake their speres vpon other to their handes, and thenne they drewe their swerdes, and smote egerly at other. And at the last syr Beaumayns smote the other vpon the helme that his hede stonyed, and there with alle he felle doune in the water, and there was he drowned. And thene he sporyd his hors vpon the londe, where the other knyghte felle vpon hym, and brake his spere, and soo they drewe theyr swerdes, and foughte longe to gyders.

At the laste syre Beaumayns clafe his helme and his heede doune to the sholders, and soo he rode vnto the damoysel & bad her ryde forth on her way. Allas she sayd that euer a kechen page shold haue that fortune to destroye suche two douzty knyghtes, thou wenest thou hast done doughtely that is not soo. For the fyrste knyghte his hors stumbled, and there he was drouned in the water, and neuer it was by thy force, nor by thy myght. And the last knyghte by myshap thou camyst behynde hym and myshappely thou slewe hym. Damoysel sayd Beaumayns ye maye saye what ye wyl, but with whom someuer I haue a doo with al I truste to god to serue hym or he departe. And therfor I recke not what ye say soo that I may wynne youre lady. Fy fy foule kechen knaue thou shalt see knyghtes that shal abate thy boost. Fayre damoysel gyue me goodly langage, and thenne my care is past, for what knyghtes someuer they be, I care not ne I doubte hem not. Also sayd she I saye it for thyne auayle, yet mayst thou torne ageyne with thy worship, for and thou folowe me, thou arte but slayne, for I see alle that euer thou dost is but by mysauenture, and not by prowesse of thy handes. Wel damoysel ye may say what ye wylle, but where someuer ye goo I wylle folowe you. Soo this Beaumayns rode with that lady tyl euensong tyme and euer she chyde hym and wold not reste. And they cam to a black launde, and there was a black hauthorne, & theron henge a blak baner, and on the other syde there henge a black shelde, and by hit stode a black spere grete and longe, and a grete black hors couerd with sylke, and a black stone fast by.

Capitulum septimum.

THER sat a knyghte al armed in black harneis, and his name was ye knyzt of the blak laūde, theñe ye damoysel whanne she sawe that knyghte she badde hym flee doun that valey for his hors was not sadeled. Gramercy sayd Beaumayns, for alweyes ye wold haue me a coward. With that the black knyghte, whanne she came nyghe hym spak, & sayd damoysel haue ye broughte this knyghte of kynge Arthur to be your champyon. Nay fayr knyghte sayd she, this is but a kechyn knaue that was fedde in kynge Arthurs kechyn for almesse. Why cometh he sayd the knyghte in suche aray, hit is shame that he bereth you company, syr I can not be delyuerd of hym sayd she, for with me he rydeth maugre myn hede, god wold that ye shold put hym from me, outher to slee hym and ye may, for he is an vnhappy knaue, and vnhappely he hath done this day, thorou myshappe I sawe hym slee two knyghtes at the passage of the water, and other dedes he dyde besorne ryght merueyllous and thorou vnhappynes. that merueylled me sayd the black knyghte that ony man that is of worshyp wylle haue adoo with hym, they knowe hym not sayd the damoysel. And for by cause he rydeth with me, they wene that he be some man of worship borne, that may be, sayd the blak knyghte, how be it as ye say that he be no man of worshyp he is a ful lykely persone, and ful lyke to be a stronge man, but thus moche shal I graunte you sayd the black knyghte. I shal putte hym doune vpon one foote, and his hors and his harneys he shal leue with me, for it were shame to me to doo hym ony more harme. Whanne syre Beaumayns herd hym saye thus, he sayd syre knyghte thou art ful large of my hors and my harneys, I lete the wete it coste the noughte, & whether hit lyketh the or not this launde wylle I passe maulgre thyn hede. And hors ne harneys getest thou none of my, but yf thou wynne hem with thy handes, and therfor lete see what thou canst doo. Sayst thou that sayd the black knyghte, now yelde thy lady fro the, for it besemeth neuer a kechyn page to ryde with suche a lady. Thou lyest sayd Beaumayns I am a gentyl man borne and of more hyghe lygnage than thou, & that wyl I preue on

thy body. Thenne in grete wrathe they departed with theyr horses, and came to gyders as hit had ben the thonder, and the black knyghtes spere brake, and Beaumayns threste hym thorou bothe his sydes, and there with his spere brak, and the truncheon lefte stylle in his syde. But neuertheles the black knyght drewe his suerd, and smote many eger strokes and of grete myghte, and hurte Beaumayns ful sore. But at the laste the black knyghte within an houre and an half he felle doune of his hors in swoune, and there he dyed. And thenne Beaumayns sawe hym soo wel horsed and armed, thenne he alyghte doune and armed hym in his armour, and soo took his hors and rode after the damoysel. Whanne she sawe hym come nyghe, she sayd awey kechyn knaue oute of the wynde, for the smelle of thy baudy clothes greueth me. Allas she sayd that euer suche a knaue shold by myshap slee soo good a knyghte as thou hast done, but alle thys is thyn vnhappynes. But here by is one shal paye the alle thy payement, and therfore yet I counceylle the, flee. it may happen me sayd Beaumayns to be beten or slayne, but I warne you fayre damoysel I wyll not flee awey, nor leue your company for al that ye can say, for euer ye say that they wil kylle me or bete me, but how someuer hit happeneth I escape, and they lye on the groūd. And therfore it were as good for you to hold you styll thus al day rebukynge me, for aweye wille I not tyl I see the vttermest of this journeye, or els I wylle be slayne, outher truly beten, therfore ryde on your waye. For folowe you I wille what someuer happen.

Capitulum octauum.

Thus as they rode to gyders they sawe a knyght come dryuend by them al in grene bothe his hors & his harneis. And whanne he came nyghe the damoysel he asked her, is that my broder the black Knyzte that ye haue brought with yow. Nay nay she sayd this vnhappy kechen knaue hath slayne your broder thorou vnhappynesse. Allas sayd the grene knyghte that is grete pyte that soo noble a knyghte as he was shold soo vnhappely be slayne, and namely of a knaues hand as ye say that he is. a traytour sayd the grene knyghte

thou shalt dye for sleynge of my broder, he was a ful noble knyghte and his name was syr Percard. I defye the said Beaumayns, for I lete the wete I slewe hym knyghtely and not shamefully. There with al the grene knyghte rode vnto an horne that was grene, and hit henge vpon a thorne, and there he blewe thre dedely motys, and there came two damoysels and armed hym lyghtely. And thenne he took a grete hors, and a grene shelde and a grene spere. And thenne they ranne to gyders with al their myghtes and brake their speres vnto their handes. And thenne they drewe their swerdes, and gaf many sadde strokes, and either of them wounded other ful yll. And at the last at an ouerthwart Beaumayns with his hors strake the grene knyghtes hors vpon the syde that he felle to the erthe. And thenne the grene knyghte auoyded his hors lightly, and dressid hym vpon foote. That sawe Beaumayns. And there with al he alighte and they rasshed to gyders lyke two myghty kempys a longe whyle, and sore they bledde bothe. With that cam the damoysel, and said my lord the grene knyghte, why for shame stande ye soo longe fyghtyng with the kechyn knaue. Allas it is shame that euer ye were made knyghte to see suche a ladde to matche suche a knyghte, as the wede ouer grewe the corne. There with the grene knyght was ashamed, and there with al he gaf a grete stroke of myghte & clafe his shelde thorou. Whan Beaumayns sawe his shelde clouen a sonder, he was a lytel ashamed of that stroke and of her langage. And thenne he gaf hym suche a buffet vpon the helme that he felle on his knees. And soo sodenly Beaumayns pulled hym vpon the ground grouelynge. And thenne the grene knyghte cryed hym mercy, and yelded hym vnto syre Beaumayns, and prayd hym to slee hym not. Al is in vayn said Beaumayns for thou shalt dye but yf this damoysel that came with me praye me to saue thy lyf, and ther with al he vnlaced his helme lyke as he wold slee hym. Fy vpon the false kechen page, I wyll neuer pray the to saue his lyf, for I will neuer be soo moche in thy daunger. Thenne shalle he deye sayde Beaumayns. Not soo hardy thou bawdy knaue sayd the damoysel, that thou slee hym. Allas sayd the grene knyghte suffre me not to dye for a fayre word may saue me. Fayr knyzt said the grene knyghte saue my lyf, & I wyl foryeue the, the dethe of my broder, and for euer to become thy

man, and xxx knyghtes that hold of me for euer shal doo you seruyse. In the deuyls name sayd the damoysel that suche a bawdy kechen knaue shold haue the and thyrtty knyghtes seruyse. Syr knyght said Beaumayns alle this auaylleth the not, but yf my damoysel speke with me for thy lyf. And ther with al he made a semblaunt to slee hym. lete be sayd the damoysel thou baudy knaue, slee hym not, for and thou do, thou shalt repente it. Damoysel said Beaumayns your charge is to me a pleasyr and at your commaundement his lyf shal be saued, & els not. Thenne he said sir Knyghte with the grene armes I releace the quyte at this damoysels request, for I wylle not make her wrothe, I wille fulfylle al that she chargeth me. And thenne the grene knyghte kneled doune, and dyd hym homage with his swerd, thenne said the damoisel me repenteth grene knyghte of your dommage, and of youre broders dethe the black knyghte, for of your helpe I had grete myster. For I drede me sore to passe this forest. Nay drede you not sayd the grene knyghte, for ye shal lodge with me this nyghte, and to morne I shalle helpe you thorou this forest. Soo they tooke theyre horses and rode to his manoyr whiche was fast there besyde.

Capitulum ix.

And euer she rebuked Beaumayns and wold not suffre hym to sytte at her table, but as the grene knyghte took hym and sat hym at a syde table. Merueylle me thynketh said the grene knyght to the damoysel why ye rebuke this noble knyghte as ye doo, for I warne you damoysel he is a full noble knyght, and I knowe no knyght is abel to matche hym therfor ye doo grete wrong to rebuke hym, for he shall do yow ryght good seruyse, for what someuer he maketh hym self, ye shalle preue at the ende that he is come of a noble blood and of kynges lygnage. Fy fy said the damoisel it is shame for you to saye of hym suche worship. Truly said the grene knyzt it were shame for me to sey of hym ony disworship, for he hath preued hym self a better knyght than I am, yett haue I mett with many knyghtes in my dayes, and neuer or this tyme haue I fond no

knyght his matche, and so that nyghte they yede vnto rest, and al that nyght the grene knyght commaunded thyrtty knyghtes pryuely to watche Beaumayns for to kepe hym from al treason. And soo on the morne they al arose and herd their masse and brake theyr fast, and thenne they tooke their horses, and rode on theire waye, and the grene knyghte conueyed hem thorou the forest, and there the grene Knyghte said my lord Beaumayns I & these thyrtty knyghtes shall be alweye at your somons both erly and late at your callyng and whether that euer ye wille sende vs, it is wel said, sayd Beaumayns. Whanne that I calle vpon you, ye must yelde you vnto kynge Arthur and all your knyghtes, yf that ye so commaunde vs, we shal ben redy at all tymes said the grene knyght. Fy fy vpon the in the deuyls name saide the damoysel that ony good knyghtes shold be obedyent vnto a kechyn knaue. Soo thenne departed the grene Knyghte and the damoysel. And thenne she said vnto Beaumayns why folowest thou me thou kechyn boye, caste away thy shelde and thy spere, and flee awaye, yet I counceille the by tymes or thou shalt say ryght soone, Allas for were thou as wyzte as euer was Wade or Laũcelot, Trystram, or the good knyghte syr lamaryk thou shalt not passe a paas here that is called the paas perillous. Damoysel said Beaumayns who is aferd lete hym flee, for it were shame to torne ageyne sythen I haue ryden soo longe with yow. Wel said the damoysel ye shal sone whether ye wyll or not.

Capitulum x.

Soo within a whyle they sawe a toure as whyte as ony snowe wel matchecold al aboute, and doubel dyked. And ouer the toure gate there henge a fyfty sheldes of dyuerse colours, and vnder that toure there was a fayr medow. And therin were many knyghtes and squyers to behold scaffoldes and pauelions, for there vpon the morn shold be a grete turnement, and the lord of the toure was in his castel and loked out at a wyndowe, and sawe a damoysel, a dwarf and a knyzt armed at al poyntes. So god me helpe said the lord with y^{t} knyzt wyll I juste, for I see that he is a knizt arraũt & soo he armed

hym and horsed hym hastely. And whanne he was on horsbak with his shelde and his spere, it was al rede bothe his hors and his harneis, and alle that to hym longeth. And whanne that he came nyghe hym he wende it hadde ben his broder the black knyghte. And thenne he cryed a loude broder what doo ye in these marches, nay nay sayd the damoysel, it is not he, this is but a kechyn knaue that was brought vp for almesse in kynge Arthurs courte. Neuertheles sayd the reed knyghte I wylle speke with hym or he departe. A sayd the damoysel this knaue hath kylled thy broder, and syre kay named hym Beaumayns, and this hors and this harneis was thy broders the black knyghte. Also I sawe thy broder the grene knyghte ouercome of his handes. Now maye ye be reuenged vpon hym, for I may neuer be quyte of hym.

With this eyther knyghtes departed in sondre, and they cam to gyder with alle their myght, and eyther of their horses fell to the erthe, and they auoyded their horses, and put their sheldes afore them and drewe their swerdes, and either gaf other sadde strokes, now here, now there, racyng, tracyng, foynynge and hurlynge lyke two bores the space of two houres. And thenne she cryed on hyhe to the rede knyghte. Allas thou noble reed knyghte, thynke what worship hath folowed the, lete neuer a kechyn knaue endure the soo longe as he doth. Thenne the reed knyght waxed wrothe and doubled his strokes and hurte Beaumayns wonderly sore that the blood ranne doune to the ground that it was wonder to see that stronge bataille. Yet at the last syre Beaumayns strake hym to the erthe, and as he wold haue slayne the reed knyghte he cryed mercy sayeng Noble knyghte slee me not, and I shall yelde me to the with fyfty knyghtes with me that be at my commaundement. And I forgyue the al the despyte that thou hast done to me, and the dethe of my broder the black knyghte. All this auailleth not said Beaumayns, but yf my damoysel praye me to saue thy lyf. And therwith he maade semblaunt to stryke of his hede. Lete be thou Beaumayns slee hym not, for he is a noble knyghte, and not soo hardy vpon thyne hede but thou saue hym. Thenne Beaumayns badde the reed knyghte stand vp and thanke the damoysel now of thy lyf. Thenne the reed knyght praid hym to see his castel, and

to be there al nyghte. Soo the damoysel thenne graunted hym, and there they had mery chere. But alweyes the damoysel spak many foule wordes vnto Beaumayns wherof the reed knyght had grete merueylle, and alle that nyghte the reed knyghte maade thre score knyghtes to watche Beaumayns that he shold haue no shame nor vylony. And vpon the morne they herd masse and dyned, and the reed knyghte came before Beaumayns with his thre score knyghtes, and there he profered hym his homage and feaute at al tymes he and his knyghtes to doo hym seruyse. I thanke you said Beaumayns, but this ye shalle graunte me. Whanne I calle vpon you to come afore my lord kynge Arthur and yelde you vnto hym to be his knyghtes. Syr said the reed knyghte I wille be redy and my felauship at your somons. So syr Beaumayns departed and the damoysel and euer she rode chydynge hym in the fowlest manere.

Capitulum xi.

Damoysel said Beaumayns ye are vncurteis so to rebuke me, as ye doo, for me semeth I haue done you good seruyse, and euer ye threate me I shal be betyn with knyghtes that we mete, but euer for al your boost they lye in the dust or in the myre, and therfor I pray you rebuke me no more. And whan ye see me beten or yolden as recreaũt thenne may ye bydde me goo from you shamefully, but fyrste I lete you wete I wylle not departe from you, for I were werse than a foole and I wold departe from you all the whyle that I wynne worship. Wel said she, ryght soone ther shall mete a knyght shal paye the alle thy wages, for he is the most man of worship of the world excepte kyng Arthur. I will wel said Beaumayns, the more he is of worship, the more shalle be my worship to haue adoo with hym. Thenne anone they were ware, where was afore them a Cyte ryche and fayre. And betwixe them and the Cyte a myle and an half there was a fayre medowe that semed newe mowen, and therin were many pauelions fayre to beholde. Lo said the damoysel yonder is a lord that oweth yonder cyte, and his custome is whan the weder is fayr to lye in this medowe to juste and torneye. And euer there

ben aboute hym fyue honderd knyghtes & gentilmen of armes, and there ben alle maner of games that ony gentylman can deuyse. That goodly lord saide Beaumayns wold I fayne see, thou shalt see hym tyme ynough saide the damoysel, and soo as she rode nere she aspyed the pauelione, where he was. Loo sayd she seest thou yonder pauelione that is al of the coloure of Inde and al maner of thynge that there is aboute men and wymmen, and horses trapped, sheldes and speres were all of the colour of Inde and his name is sir persant of Inde the moost lordlyest knyghte that euer thou lokest on. Hit may wel be said Beaumayns, but be he neuer so stoute a knyghte in this felde, I shalle abyde tyl that I see hym vnder his shelde. A foole saide she thou were better flee by tymes. Why sayd Beaumayns and he be suche a knyghte as ye make hym he wylle not sette vpon me with alle his men, or with his v. C. knyghtes. For and ther come no more but one at ones, I shall hym not fayle whylest my lyf lasteth. Fy fy said the damoysel that euer suche a stynkynge knaue shold blowe suche a boost. Damoysel he said ye ar to blame soo to rebuke me. For I had leuer do fyue batails, than so to be rebuked, lete hym come and thenne lete hym doo his werst. Syre she said, I merueylle what thou arte and of what kyn thou art come, boldly thou spekest, and boldly thou hast done, that haue I sene, therfore I praye the saue thy self and thou mayst, for thy hors and thou haue had grete traueylle. And I drede we dwelle ouer longe from the sege. For hit is but hens seuen myle, and alle perillous passages we ar past saue al only this passage, and here I drede me sore lest ye shalle ketche some hurte, therfore I wold ye were hens that ye were not brysed nor hurte with this stronge knyghte. But I lete you wete this syr Persant of ynde is no thyng of myzte nor strength vnto the knyghte that leid the syege aboute my lady. As for that said syre Beaumayns be it as it be may. For sythen I am come soo nyghe this knyght I wille preue his myghte or I departe from hym, and els I shalle be shamed, and I now withdrawe me from hym. And therfore damoysel haue ye no doubte by the grace of god I shall so dele with this knyghte that within two houres after none I shalle delyuer hym. And thenne shal we come to the syege by day lyghte. O Jhesu merueille haue I said the damoysel what maner a man ye be,

for hit may neuer ben otherwyse but that ye be comen of a noble blood, for soo foule ne shamefully dyd neuer woman rule a knyghte as I haue done you, and euer curtoisly ye haue suffred me, and that cam neuer but of a gentyl blood.

Damoysel sayd Beaumayns a knyght may lytel do that may not suffre a damoisel, for what someuer ye said vnto me, I took none hede to your wordes, for the more ye sayd the more ye angryd me, and my wrathe I wrekyd vpon them that I had a doo with al. And therfor alle the myssayenge that ye myssayed me, fordered me in my bataill & caused me to thynke to shewe & preue my self at the ende what I was, for perauentur thouz I had mete in kyng Arthurs kechyn, yet I myzt haue had mete ynouz in other places, but alle that I dyd it for to preue & assaye my frendes, and that shalle be knowen another day, and whether that I be a gentylman borne or none, I lete you wete fayre damoysel I haue done you gentilmans seruyse, and parauentur better seruyse yet wille I do or I departe from you. Allas she said fayr Beaumayns forgyue me alle that I haue myssaid or done ageynst the. Wyth alle my herte said he I forgyue it yow, for ye dyde no thyng but as ye shold doo, for al your euyl wordes pleasyd me, & damoysel saide Beaumayns syn hit lyketh you to saye thus fayre vnto me, wete ye wel it gladeth my herte gretely, and now me semeth ther is no knyght lyuynge but I am able ynough for hym.

Capitulum Duodecimum.

Wyth this sir Persant of ynde had aspyed them as they houed in the felde, and knyztly he sente to them whether he came in werre or in pees. say to thy lord said beaumayns I take no force, but whether as hym lyst hym self. Soo the messager went ageyne vnto syr Persaunt, and told hym alle his ansuer. Wel thenne will I haue adoo with hym to the vtteraunce, and soo he purueyed hym and rode ageynst hym. And Beaumayns sawe hym and made hym redy, & ther they mette with all that euer theyr horses myght renne, and braste their speres eyther in thre pyeces, & their horses rassed so to

gyders that bothe their horses felle dede to the erthe & lyztly they auoyded their horses, and put their sheldes afore them, & drewe their swerdes, and gaf many grete strokes that somtyme they hurtled to gyder that they felle grouelyng on the ground. Thus they fought two houres and more that their sheldes & theyr hauberkes were al forhewen, & in many stedys they were wounded. So at the last syr Beaumayns smote hym thorou the cost of the body, & thenne he retrayed hym here & there & knyghtly mayntened his batail long tyme. And at the last though hym lothe were Beaumayns smote sir Persant aboue vpon the helme that he felle grouelyng to the erthe, & thenne he lepte vpon hym ouerthwart and vnlaced his helme to haue slayne hym. Thenne syr Persant yelded hym & asked hym mercy. With that cam ye damoisel & praid to saue his lyf. I wil wel, for it were pyte this noble knyzt shold dye. gramercy sayd Persaunt gentyl knyzt & damoysel. For certeynly now I wote wel it was ye that slewe my broder the black knyghte, at the black thorne, he was a ful noble knyzte, his name was syr Perard. Also I am sure that ye are he that wanne myn other brother the grene knyght, his name was syre Pertolepe. Also ye wanne my broder the reed knyght syr Perrymones. And now syn ye haue wonne these, this shal I do for to please you ye shal haue homage & feaute of me, & an C knyghtes to be alweyes at your commaundement to go & ryde where ye wil commaunde vs, & so they wente vnto sir Persauntes pauelione & dranke the wyne, & ete spyeces, & afterward sire Persaunte made hym to reste vpon a bedde vntyl souper tyme, and after souper to bedde ageyne. Whan Beaumayns was abedde syr Persaunt had a lady a faire douzter of xviii yere of age and there he called her vnto hym, & charged her & commaunded her vpon his blessynge to go vnto the knyghtes bedde, and lye doun by his syde, & make hym no straunge chere, but good chere, and take hym in thyne armes & kysse hym, & loke that this be done I charge you as ye wil haue my loue & my good wil. So syr Persants doughter dyd as her fader bad her, and soo she wente vnto syr Beaumayns bed, & pryuely she dispoylled her, & leid her doune by hym, & thenne he awoke & sawe her & asked her what she was, syre she said I am sir Persants douzter that by the commaundement of my fader am come hyder.

Be ye a mayde or a wyf said he, sir she said I am a clene maiden. God defende sayd he that I shold defoyle you to doo syre Persaunt suche a shame, therfore fayre damoysel aryse oute of this bedde or els I wille. Syre she said I cam not to you by myn owne wille but as I was commaunded. Allas said syr Beaumayns I were a shameful knyghte and I wolde do your fader ony disworship, and so he kyst her and soo she departed and came vnto syr Persant her fader, and told hym alle how she had spedde. Truly saide syre Persaunt what someuer he be, he is comen of a noble blood, and soo we leue hem there tyl on the morne.

Capitulum xiii.

And soo on the morne the damoysel & sir Beaumayns herd masse & brake their fast, and soo took their leue. Fair damoysel said Persant whether ward ar ye way ledyng this knyghte, syr she said this knyghte is goyng to the sege, that besyegeth my syster in the castel Dangerus. A a sayd persaunt that is the knyghte of the reed launde, the whiche is the moost peryllous knyghte that I knowe now lyuyng, and a man that is withouten mercy, and men sayen that he hath seuen mens strength. god saue you said he to Beaumayns from y^{t} knyghte, for he doth grete wrong to that lady, and that is grete pyte, for she is one of the fairest ladyes of the world, & me semeth that your damoysel is her sister, is not your name Lynet said he, ye sir said she, and my lady my systers name is dame Lyonesse. Now shal I telle you said syr Persaunt, thys reed knyghte of the reed laund hath layne long at the syege wel nyghe this two yeres, and many tymes he myghte haue had her and he had wold, but he prolongeth the tyme to thys entent, for to haue sir laũcelot du lake to doo bataill with hym, or sir Trystram or syr Lamerak de galys, or syre Gawayne, & this is his taryenge soo longe at the syege. Now my lord syre Persaunt of ynde saide the damoysel Lynet I requyre you that ye wille make this gentilman knyghte or euer he fyghte with the reed knyghte. I will with all my herte said syr Persaunt and it please hym to take the ordre of knyghthode of so symple a

man as I am. Sire said Beaumayns I thanke you for your good wil, for I am better sped, for certaynly the noble knyght sir Launcelot made me knyght. A said sir Persant of a more renomed knyghte myghte ye not be made knyghte. For of alle knyghtes he maye be called chyef of knyghthode, & so all the world saith that betwixe thre knyghtes is departed clerly knyghthode, that is laūcelot du lake, syr Trystram de lyones and sir Lamerak de galis, these bere now the renommee, there ben many other knyghtes as sir Palamydes the sarasyn and sir Sasere his broder. Also syr Bleoberys and sire Blamore de ganys his broder. Also syr Bors de Ganys & syr Ector de marys & sir Percyuale de galis, these & many mo ben noble kniztes, but ther be none y^t^ passe y^e^ iiij aboue said, therfor god spede you wel said syr Persant, for and ye may matche the rede knyghte ye shalle be called the fourth of the world, sir said Beaumayns I wold fayne be of good fame, and of knyghthode. And I lete you wete I cam of good men, for I dare say my fader was a noble man, and soo that ye wil kepe hit in close and this damoysel, I wyl telle you of what kyn I am. We wille not discouer you said they both tyl ye commaunde vs by the feythe we owe vnto god. Truly thenne saide he, my name is Gareth of Orkeney and kynge Lot was my fader, & my moder is kynge Arthurs syster, her name is Dame Morgawse, and sir Gawayne is my broder, and sir Agrauayne & sir Gaheryes, and I am the yongest of hem alle. And yet wote not kyng Arthur nor sir Gawayn what I am.

Capitulum xiiii.

Soo the book saith, that the lady that was biseged had word of her systers comynge by the dwerf and a knyghte with her, and how he had passed al the perillous passages. What manere a man is he said the lady, he is a noble knyght truly madame said the dwerf and but a yong man, but he is as lykely a man as euer ye sawe ony. What is he sayd the damoysel, and of what kynne is he comen, and of whome was he made knyghte. Madame said the dwerf he is the kynges sone of Orkeney, but his name I wille not telle you as at this

tyme, but wete ye wel of syre launcelot was he maade knyght, for of none other wolde he be maade knyghte, and sire kay named hym Beaumayns. how escaped he said the lady from the bretheren of Persaunt. Madame he said as a noble knyghte shold. Fyrste he slewe two bretheren att a passage of a water. A saide she they were good knyghtes but they were murtherers, the one hyght Gherard de breusse, & the other knyght hyght sir Arnolde le Brewse, thenne madame he recountred with the black knyght, and slewe hym in playne batail & so he toke his hors & his armour & fought with the grene knyght & wanne hym in playne bataill, & in lyke wyse he serued the reed knyzt, and after in the same wyse he serued the blewe knyzt & wan hym in playn batail. thēne said the lady he hath ouercome sir Persaūt of Inde, one of the noblest knyztes of the world, & y^e^ dwerf said he hath wōne al the iiii bretherē & slayn the black knyght, and yet he dyd more tofore he ouerthrew sir kay and lefte hym nyghe dede vpon the ground. Also he dyd a grete batayll with syre launcelot, and there they departed on euen handes. And thenne syre launcelot made hym knyghte. Dwerf sayd the lady I am gladde of these tydynges, therfor go thou in an hermytage of myn here by, and there shalt thow bere with the of my wyn in two flagans of siluer, they ar of two galons, and also two cast of brede with fatte veneson bake and deynte foules, and a cop of gold here I delyuer the, that is ryche and precyous and bere all this to myn hermytage, and put it in the heremytes handes. And sythen go thow vnto my syster and grete her wel, and commaūde me vnto that gentyl knyghte, and praye hym to ete and to drynke and make hym stronge, and say ye hym I thanke hym of his curtosye and goodenes that he wold take vpon hym suche labour for me that neuer dyd hym bounte nor curtosye. Also pray hym that he be of good herte & courage, for he shalle mete with a ful noble knyghte, but he is neyther of bounte, curtosye, nor gentylnes, for he attendyth vnto nothynge but to murther, & that is the cause I can not prayse hym nor loue hym. So this dwerf departed, and came to syre Persant where he fond the damoysel lynet and syr Beaumayns, and there he tolde hem alle as ye haue herd, and thenne they took theyr leue, but syr Persant took an ambelyng hacney and conueyed hem on theyr wayes. And thenne

belefte hem to god, and soo within a lytil whyle they came to that heremytage, and there they dranke the wyne, and ete the veneson and the foules baken.

And so whan they had repasted hem wel, the dwerf retorned ageyn with his vessel vnto the castel ageyne, and there mette with hym the reed knyght of the reed laundes, and asked hym from whens that he came, and where he had ben. Syr sayd the dwerf I haue ben with my ladyes syster of this castel and she hath ben at kynge Arthurs courte, and broughte a knyghte with her. thenne I accompte her trauaille but loste. For though she had broughte with her syre launcelot, sir Trystram, syr Lamerak or syr gawayne, I wold thynke my selfe good ynough for them all. it may well be said the dwerf, but this knyghte hath passed alle the peryllous passages & slayn the black knyghte and other two mo, and wonne the grene knyght, the reed knyghte and the blewe knyghte. thenne is he one of these four that I haue afore reherced. He is none of tho said the dwerf, but he is a kynges sone. What is his name sayd the reed knyght of the reed laund, that wille I not telle you seyd the dwerf, but sire kay vpon scorne named hym Beaumayns. I care not said the knyght what knyghte soo euer he be, for I shal soone delyuer hym. And yf I euer matche hym he shalle haue a shameful dethe as many other haue had, that were pyte sayd the dwerf. And it is merueill that ye make suche shameful warre vpon noble knyghtes.

Capitulum xv.

Noo leue we the knyghte and the dwerf, and speke we of Beaumayns that al knyzt lay in the hermytage, & vpon the morne he and the damoysel lynet herd theire masse, and brake their fast. And thenne they toke theyr horses, and rode thorou oute a fair forest, and thenne they came to a playne and sawe where were many pauelions and tentys, and a fayr castel, and there was moche smoke and grete noyse, and whanne they came nere the sege, syr Beaumayns aspyed vpon grete trees as he rode, how there henge ful goodly armed knyghtes by the neck and theire sheldes aboute theire neckys with

their swerdes, and gylt spores vpon their heles, and soo there henge nyghe a fourty knyghtes shamefully with ful ryche armes. Thenne sir Beaumayns abated his countenaunce & sayd what meneth this. Fayre syre said the damoysel abate not your chere for all this syghte, for ye must courage your self or els ye ben al shente, for all these knyghtes came hyder to this sege to rescowe my syster Dame lyones, and whanne the reede knyghte of the reed laund hadde ouercome hem, he putte them to this shameful dethe withoute mercy and pyte. And in the same wyse he wyll serue you, but yf ye quyte you the better. Now Jhesu deffende me said Beaumayns from suche a vylaynous dethe and shenship of armes. For rather than I sholde so be faren with all, I wolde rather be slayn manly in playn bataille. Soo were ye better said the damoysel, for trust not in hym is no curtosye but alle goth to the deth or shameful murther, and that is pyte, for he is a ful lykely man, wel made of body, and a ful noble knyghte of prowesse and a lorde of grete laundes and possessions. Truly said Beaumayns, he may wel be a good knyghte, but he vseth shameful customs and it is merueylle that he endureth so longe that none of the noble knyghtes of my lord Arthurs haue not delt with hym. And thenne they rode to the dykes and sawe them double dyked with ful warly wallis, and there were lodged many grete lordes nyghe the wallys, and there was grete noyse of mynstralsy, and the see betyd vpon the one syde of the walles where were many shippes and maryners noyse with hale & how. And also there was fast by a Sykamore tree, and ther henge an horne the grettest that euer they sawe of an Olyfantes bone, and this knyght of the reed laund had hanged it vp ther that yf ther came ony arraunt knyghte, he muste blowe that horne, and thenne wylle he make hym redy & come to hym to doo bataille. But syr I pray you said the damoysel Lynet blowe ye not the horne tyl it be hyghe none, for now it is aboute pryme, & now encreaced his myghte, that as men say he hath seuen mens strengthe. A fy for shame fair damoisel say ye neuer soo more to me. For and he were as good a knyghte as euer was I shalle neuer fayle hym in his moost myghte, for outher I wille wynne worship worshipfully or dye knyghtely in the felde, and ther with he spored his hors streyghte to the Sykamore tree, and blewe soo the

horne egerly that alle the sege and the castel range therof. And thenne there lepte oute knyghtes oute of their tentys and pauelions, and they within the castel loked ouer the wallis and oute att wyndowes. Thenne the reed knyghte of the reed laũdes armed hym hastely, and two barons sette on his spores vpon his heles, and alle was blood reed his armour spere and shelde. And an Erle bucled his helme vpon his hede, and thenne they broughte hym a rede spere and a rede stede, and soo he rode in to a lytyl vale vnder the castel, that al that were in the castel and at the sege myghte behold the bataill.

Capitulum xvi.

Syre sayd the damoysel Lynet vnto syr Beaumayns loke ye be gladde and lyght, for yonder is your dedely enemy, and at yonder wyndowe is my lady my syster dame Lyones. Where said Beaumayns, yonder said the damoysel & poynted with her fynger, that is trouthe sayd Beaumayns. She besemeth a ferre the fayrest lady that euer I loked vpon and truly he said I aske no better quarel than now for to do bataylle, for truly she shalle be my lady, and for her I wylle fyghte. And euer he loked vp to the wyndowe with gladde countenaunce. And the lady Lyones made curtosy to hym doune to the erthe with holdynge vp bothe their handes. Wyth that the reed knyghte of the reed laundes callid to syr Beaumayns, leue syr knyghte thy lokynge, and behold me I coũceille the, for I warne the wel she is my lady, and for her I haue done many stronge batails. Yf thou haue so done said Beaumayns, me semeth it was but waste labour, for she loueth none of thy felauship, and thou to loue that loueth not the, is but grete foly. For and I vnderstode that she were not glad of my comynge, I wold be auysed or I dyd bataille for her. But I vnderstande by the syegyng of this castel she may forbere thy felauship. And therfor wete thou wel thou rede knyghte of the reed laundes, I loue her, and wille rescowe her or els to dye. Saist thou that said the reed knyghte, me semeth, thou oughte of reson to beware by yonder knyghtes that thow sawest hange vpon yonder trees.

Fy for shame said Beaumayns that euer thou sholdest saye or do so euyl, for in that thou shamest thy self and knyghthode, and thou mayst be sure ther wylle no lady loue the that knoweth thy wycked custommes. And now thou wenest that the syghte of these hanged knyghtes shold fere me. Nay truly not so, that shameful syght causeth me to haue courage and hardynes ageynste the more than I wold haue had ageynst the, and thou were a wel ruled knyght, make the redy said the reed knyghte of the reed laũdes, and talke no lenger with me. Thenne syre Beaumayns badde the damoysel goo from hym, and thenne they putte their speres in their reystes and came to gyders with alle their myzt that they had bothe, and eyther smote other in myddes of their sheldes that the paytrellys, sursenglys, and crowpers braste, and felle to the erthe bothe, and the reynys of their brydels in their handes, and soo they laye a grete whyle sore stonyed that al that were in the castel and in the sege wende their neckes had ben broken, and thenne many a straunger and other sayd the straunge knyzt was a bygge man, and a noble juster, for or now we sawe neuer noo knyghte matche the reed knyghte of the reed laundes, thus they sayd bothe within the castel and withoute, thenne lyghtly they auoyded theyr horses and put their sheldes afore them, and drewe their swerdes and ranne to gyders lyke two fyers lyons, and eyther gafe other suche buffets vpon their helmes that they relyd bacward bothe two strydys, and thenne they recouerd bothe and hewe grete pyeces of theire harneis and theire sheldes, that a grete parte felle in to the feldes.

Capitulum xvii.

And thenne thus they foughte tyl it was past none, and neuer wold stynte tyl att the laste they lacked wynde bothe, and thẽne they stode wagyng and scateryng, pontyng, blowynge and bledynge that al that behelde them for the moost party wepte for pyte. Soo whan they had restyd them a whyle, they yede to bataille ageyne, tracyng, racyng, foynyng as two borés. And at some tyme they toke their renne as hit had ben two rammys & hurtled to gyders that somtyme

they felle grouelyng to the erthe. And at somtyme they were so amased that eyther took others swerd in stede of his owne.

Thus they endured tyl euensong tyme, that there was none that beheld them myghte knowe whether was lyke to wynne the bataill, and their armour was so fer hewen that men myzt see their naked sydes, and in other places, they were naked, but euer the naked places they dyd defende, and the rede knyghte was a wyly knyght of werre, and his wyly fyghtyng taughte syr Beaumayns to be wyse; but he aboughte hit fulle sore or he dyd aspye his fyghtynge. And thus by assente of them bothe they graunted eyther other to rest, and so they sette hem doune vpon two molle hylles there besydes the fyghtynge place, and eyther of hem vnlaced his helme, and toke the colde wynd, for either of their pages was fast by them to come whā they called to vnlace their harneis and to sette hem on ageyn at their commaundement. And thenne whan syr Beaumayns helme was of, he loked vp to the wyndowe, and there he sawe the faire lady Dame Lyones, and she made hym suche countenaunce that his herte waxed lyghte and joly, and ther with he bad the reed knyghte of the reed laundes make hym redy and lete vs doo the bataille to the vtteraunce. I will wel said the knyghte, and thenne they laced vp their helmes, and their pages auoyded, & they stepte to gyders & fought fresshely, but the reed knyghte of the reed laundes awayted hym, & at an ouerthwart smote hym within the hand, that his swerd felle oute of his hand, and yet he gaf hym another buffet vpon the helme that he felle grouelynge to the erthe, & the reed knyghte felle ouer hym, for to holde hym doune. Thenne cryed the maiden Lynet on hyghe. O syr Beaumayns where is thy courage become. Allas my lady my syster beholdeth the and she sobbeth and wepeth, that maketh myn herte heuy. When syr Beaumayns herd her say soo, he abrayed vp with a grete myght and gate hym vpon his feet, and lyghtely he lepte to his swerd and gryped hit in his hand and doubled hys paas vnto the reed knyghte and there they foughte a newe bataille to gyder. But sir Beaumayns thenne doubled his strokes, and smote soo thyck that he smote the swerd oute of his hand, and thenne he smote hym vpon the helme that he felle to the erthe, and sir Beaumayns felle vpon hym, and vnlaced his helme to haue slayne hym,

and thenne he yelded hym and asked mercy, and said with a lowde vois O noble knyghte I yelde me to thy mercy. Thenne syr Beaumayns bethoughte hym vpon the knyghtes that he had made to be hanged shamefully, and thenne he said I may not with my worship saue thy lyf, for the shameful dethes that thou hast caused many ful good knyghtes to dye. Syre saide the reed knyghte of the reed laundes hold your hand and ye shalle knowe the causes why I put hem to so shameful a dethe. saye on said sir Beaumayns. Syre I loued ones a lady a faire damoisel, and she had her broder slayne, and she said hit was syr launcelot du lake, or els syr gawayn, and she praide me as that I loued her hertely that I wold make her a promyse by the feith of my knyghthode for to laboure dayly in armes vnto I mette wyth one of them, and alle that I myghte ouercome I shold putte them vnto a vylaynous dethe, and this is the cause that I haue putte alle these knyghtes to dethe, and soo I ensured her to do alle the vylony vnto kynge Arthurs knyghtes, and that I shold take vengeaūce vpon alle these knyghtes and syr now I wille the telle that euery daye my strengthe encreaceth tylle none, and al this tyme haue I seuen mens strengthe.

Capitulum xviii.

Thenne came ther many Erles and Barons and noble knyghtes and praid that knyghte to saue his lyf and take hym to your prysoner. And all they felle vpon their knees and prayd hym of mercy, and that he wolde saue his lyf, and syr they all sayd it were fairer of hym to take homage and feaute, and lete hym holde his landes of you than for to slee hym, by his deth ye shal haue none auauntage and his mysdedes that ben done maye not ben vndone. And therfor he shal make amendys to al partyes & we al wil become your men and doo you homage and feaute. Fayre lordes said Beaumayns, wete you wel I am ful lothe to slee this knyzt neuertheles he hath done passyng ylle and shamefully. But in soo moche al that he dyd was at a ladyes request I blame hym the lesse, and so for your sake I wil releace hym that he shal haue his lyf vpon this couenaunt, that he

goo within the castel, and yelde hym there to the lady. And yf she wil forgyue and quyte hym, I wil wel. With this he make her amendys of al the trespas he hath done ageynst her and her landes. And also whanne that is done that ye goo vnto the courte of kyng Arthur, and there that ye aske syr Launcelot mercy, & syr Gawayn for the euyl wil ye haue had ageynst them. sire said the reed knyght of the reed laundes, al this wil I do as ye commaunde, and syker assuraunce and borowes ye shal haue. And soo thenne whan the assuraunce was made, he made his homage and feaute, and alle tho erles and barons wyth hym. And thenne the mayden Lynet came to syre Beaumayns, and vnarmed hym and serched his woundes, and stynted his blood, and in lyke wyse she dyd to the rede knyghte of the reed laundes. and there they soiourned ten dayes in their tentes, and the reed knyghte made his lordes and seruauntes to doo alle the pleasyre that they myghte vnto syre Beaumayns. And soo within a whyle the reed knyghte of the reed laundes yede vnto the castel, and putte hym in her grace. And soo she receyued hym vpon suffysaunt seurte, so alle her hurtes were wel restored of al that she coude complayne, and thenne he departed vnto the courte of kynge Arthur, and there openly the reed knyghte of the reed laundes putte hym in the mercy of syre Launcelot and syr Gawayne, and there he told openly how he was ouercome and by whome, and also he told alle the batails from the begynnynge vnto the endynge. Jhesu mercy sayd kynge Arthur and sire Gawayne we merueylle moche of what blood he is come, for he is a noble knyghte. Haue ye no merueille saide sire Launcelot, for ye shal ryght wel wete that he is comen of a ful noble blood, and as for his myghte and hardynes ther ben but fewe now lyuynge that is so myghty as he is, and so noble of prowesse. It semeth by yow said kynge Arthur that ye knowe his name, and fro whens he is come, and of what blood he is. I suppose I doo so said Launcelot, or els I wold not haue yeuen hym thordre of knyzthode, but he gaf me suche charge at that tyme that I shold neuer discouer hym vntyl he requyred me or els it be knowen openly by some other.

Capitulum xix.

Now torne we vnto syr Beaumayns that desyred of Lynet that he myght see her syster his lady. Syre she said I wold fayne ye sawe her. Thenne syr Beaumayns al armed hym and toke his hors and his spere and rode streyzt vnto the castel. And whanne he cam to the gate he fond there many men armed and pulled vp the drawe brydge & drewe the porte cloose. Thenne merueilled he why they wold not suffre hym to entre. And thenne he loked vp to the wyndow. And there he sawe the fair Lyones that said on hyghe go thy way, syr Beaumayns, for as yet thou shalt not haue holy my loue vnto the tyme that thou be callyd one of the nombre of the worthy knyghtes. And therfor goo laboure in worship this twelue monethe, and thenne thou shalt here newe tydynges. Allas faire lady said Beaumayns I haue not deserued that ye shold shewe me this straungenes, and I had wend that I shold haue ryght good chere with you and vnto my power I haue deserued thanke, and wel I am sure I haue boughte your loue with parte of the best blood within my body. Fayre curteis knyghte said Dame Lyones, be not displeasyd nor ouer hasty, for wete you wel, your grete trauaill nor good loue shal not be lost, for I consydre your grete trauail & labour, your bounte and your goodenes as me oughte to doo. And therffore goo on your wey, and loke that ye be of good comforte for all shal be for your worship, and for the best, & perde a twelue moneth wille soone be done, and trust me fair knyghte I shal be true to you and neuer to bitraye you, but to my dethe I shalle loue you, and none other. And ther with alle she torned her from the wyndowe, and syr Beaumayns rode awey ward from the castel makyng grete dole, and soo he rode here and there & wyste not ne where he rode tyl hit was derke nyghte. And thenne it happend hym to come to a poure mans hous and there he was herborowed all that nyghte.

But syr Beaumayns hadde no rest but walowed and wrythed for the loue of the lady of the castel. And soo vpon the morowe he took his hors and rode vntyl vnderne, and thēne he came to a brode water, and there by was a grete lodge, and there he alyghte to slepe

and leid his hede vpon the shelde, and bitoke his hors to the dwarf, and commaunded hym to watche al nyghte. Now torne we to the lady of the same castel, that thoughte moche vpon Beaumayns, and thenne she called vnto her syr Gryngamore her broder, and praid hym in al maner as he loued her hertely that he wold ryde after syr Beaumayns, and euer haue ye wayte vpon hym tyl ye may fynde hym slepynge, for I am sure in his heuynes he wil alyzt doun in some place, and leye hym doune to slepe. And therfor haue ye your wayte vpon hym, and in the preuyest manere ye can take his dwerf, and go ye your waye with hym as faste as euer ye maye or syr Beaumayns awake. For my syster Lynet telleth me that he can telle of what kynreed he is come, and what is his ryghte name. And the meane whyle I and my syster wille ryde vnto youre castel to awayte whanne ye brynge with you the dwerf. And thenne whan ye haue broughte hym vnto youre Castel, I wylle haue hym in examynacion my self, vnto the tyme that I knowe what is his ryghte name, and of what kynred he is come, shalle I neuer be mery at my herte. Syster said syre Gryngamore alle thys shalle be done after your entente. And soo he rode alle the other daye and the nyghte tylle that he fond syre Beaumayns lyenge by a water and his hede vpon his shelde for to slepe. And thenne whanne he sawe syre Beaumayns fast on slepe, he cam stylly stalkyng behynde the dwerf and plucked hym fast vnder his arme, and soo he rode aweye with hym as faste as euer he myght vnto his owne castel.

And this syre Gryngamors armes were alle black and that to hym longeth. But euer as he rode with the dwerf toward his castel, he cryed vnto his lord, and prayd hym of helpe. And there with awoke syre Beaumayns, and vp he lepte lyghtly, & sawe where the Gryngamor rode his waye with the dwerf, and soo syr Gryngamor rode oute of his syghte.

Capitulum xx.

THENNE syre Beaumayns putte on his helme anone, and buckeled his shelde, and tooke his hors, and rode after hym alle that

euer he myghte ryde thorou marys and feldes and grete dales, that many tymes his hors and he plonged ouer the hede in depe myres, for he knewe not the wey, but took the gaynest waye in that woodenes that many tymes he was lyke to perysshe. And at the laste hym happend to come to a fayre grene waye. And there he mette with a poure man of the countreye whom he salewed & asked hym whether he mette not with a knyghte vpon a black hors & all black harneis a lytel dwerf syttynge behynde hym with heuy chere. Syre saide this poure man here by me came syre Gryngamor the knyght with suche a dwerf mornyng as ye saye, & therfore I rede you not folowe hym, For he is one of the perylloust knyghtes of the world, and his castel is here nyhe hand but two myle, therfor we aduyse you ryde not after syr Gryngamor but yf ye owe hym good wille.

Soo leue we syre Beaumayns rydynge toward the castel and speke we of sir Gryngamor and the dwerf. Anone as the dwerf was come to the castel, dame Lyones and dame Lynet her syster asked the dwerf where was his maister borne, and of what lygnage he was come. And but yf thou telle me said dame Lyones thou shalt neuer escape this castel, but euer here to be prysoner. As for that said the dwerf I fere not gretely to telle his name and of what kynne he is come. Wete ye wel he is a kynges sone, and his moder is syster to kyng Arthur, and he is broder to the good knyghte of syre Gawayne, and his name is syre Gareth of Orkeney, and now I haue told you his ryght name, I praye you fayre lady lete me goo to my lord ageyne, for he wille neuer oute of this countrey vntyl that he haue me ageyne. And yf he be angry, he wil doo moche harme or that he be stynte, and worche you wrake in this countray.

As for that thretyng sayd syr Gryngamore be it as it be may we wille goo to dyner, and soo they wasshed and wente to mete, and made hem mery and wel at ease, by cause the lady Lyones of the castel was there, they made grete Joye.

Truly Madame sayd Lynet vnto her syster wel maye he be a kynges sone, for he hath many good tatches on hym, for he is curteis and mylde and the moost sufferynge man that euer I mette with al. For I dar saye ther was neuer gentylwoman reuyled man in soo foule a manere, as I haue rebuked hym. And at all tymes he gafe me

goodely and meke ansuers ageyne. And as they sate thus talkynge, ther came sire Gareth in at the gate with an angry countenaunce and his swerd drawen in his hand, and cryed aloude that alle the castel myzt here hit sayeng thou traitour syre Gryngamor delyuer me my dwerf ageyn, or by the feith that I owe to the ordre of knyghthode I shal doo the al the harme that I can. Thenne syr Gryngamor loked oute at a wyndow and said syr gareth of Orkeney leue thy bostyng wordes, for thou getest not thy dwerf ageyne. Thou coward knyghte sayd syr Gareth brynge hym with the, and come and doo bataylle with me, and wynne hym and take hym. So wille I do said syr Gryngamor and me lyst, but for al thy grete wordes thou getest hym not. A fayr broder said dame Lyones I wold he had his dwerf ageyne, for I wold he were not wroth, for now he hath told me al my desyre I kepe no more of the dwerf. And also broder he hath done moche for me, and delyuerd me from the reed knyghte of the reed laundes, and therfor broder I owe hym my seruyse afore al knyghtes lyuynge. And wete ye wel that I loue hym before al other, and ful fayne I wold speke with hym. But in no wyse I wold that he wist what I were, but that I were another straunge lady. Wel said syr Gryngamor sythen I knowe now your wille, I wylle obeye now vnto hym. And ryght ther with al he wente doun vnto syr Gareth, and said syr I crye you mercy, and al that I haue mysdone I wille amend hit at your wille. And therfore I pray you that ye wold alyghte, and take suche chere as I can make you in this castel. Shal I haue my dwerfe saide syre Gareth, ye syr, and alle the pleasaunce that I can make you, for as soone as your dwerf told me what ye were and of what blood ye ar come, and what noble dedes ye haue done in these marches, thenne I repentyd of my dedes.

And thenne syre Gareth alyghte, and ther came his dwerf & took his hors. O my felawe said syr gareth, I haue had many aduentures for thy sake. And soo syre Gryngamor tooke hym by the hand, and ledde hym in to the halle where his own wyf was.

Capitulum xxi.

And thenne came forth Dame Lyones arayed lyke a pryncesse, and there she made hym passyng good chere and he her ageyne, and they had goodely langage & louely countenaunce to gyder. And syre Gareth thought many tymes Jhesu wold that the lady of the castel perillous were so fayre as she was, there were al maner of games & playes of dauncyng and syngynge. And euer the more syre Gareth bihelde that lady, the more he loued her, and so he brenned in loue that he was past hym self in his reason, and forth toward nyghte they yede vnto souper, and syre Gareth myghte not ete for his loue was soo hote, that he wist not where he was. Alle these lokes aspyed syr Gryngamor, and thenne at after souper he callid his syster Dame Lyones vnto a chamber, and sayd, fair syster I haue wel aspyed your coũtenaũce betwixe you and this knyght. And I wil syster that ye wete he is a ful noble knyzt, & yf ye can make hym to abyde here I wil do hym all the pleasyr y^{t} I can, for & ye were better than ye ar ye were wel bywaryd vpon hym. Fayre broder said Dame Lyones I vnderstande wel that the knyghte is good & come he is of a noble hous. Notwithstandyng I wille assaye hym better how be it I am moost beholdyng to hym of ony erthely mã for he hath had grete labour for my loue, and passid many a daungerous passage. Ryght soo syr Gryngamor wente vnto syr Gareth and said syre make ye good chere, for ye shal haue none other cause, for this lady my syster is yours at al tymes her worship saued, for wete ye wel she loueth you as wel as ye doo her and better, yf better may be. And I wist that said syr Gareth, ther lyued not a gladder man than I wold be. Upon my worship said syr Gryngamor trust vnto my promyse. And as long as it lyketh you ye shal soiourne with me and this lady shal be with vs dayly and nyghtly to make yow alle the chere that she can. I wille wel said syre Gareth. For I haue promysed to be nyghe this countrey this twelue moneth. And wel I am sure kynge Arthur and other noble knyghtes wille fynde me where that I am within this twelfe moneth. For I shal be soughte and founden yf that I be on lyue. And thenne the noble

knyghte syre Gareth wente vnto the dame Lyones whiche he thēne moche loued, & kyst her many tymes, and eyther made grete joye of other. And there she promysed hym her loue certaynly to loue hym and none other the dayes of her lyf. Thenne this lady dame Lyones by the assente of her broder told syr Gareth alle the trouth what she was. And how she was the same lady that he dyd batail for, and how she was lady of the castel peryllous, and there she told hym how she caused her broder to take awey his dwerf.

Capitulum xxii.

For this cause to knowe the certaynte what was your name, and of what kynne ye were come. And thenne she lete fetche tofore hym Lynet the damoysel that had ryden with hym many wylsome wayes. Thenne was syre Gareth more gladder than he was to fore. And thēne they trouth plyte eche other to loue, and neuer to faylle whyles their lyfe lasteth. And soo they brente bothe in loue that they were accorded to abate their lustes secretely. And there Dame Lyones counceylled syr Gareth to slepe in none other place but in the halle. And there she promysed hym to come to his bedde a lytel afore mydnyght. This counceil was not soo pryuely kepte but it was vnderstande, for they were but yonge bothe and tendyr of age, and had not vsed none suche craftes to forne. Wherfor the damoysel Lynet was a lytel displeasyd, and she thoughte her syster Dame Lyones was a lytel ouer hasty, that she myghte not abyde the tyme of her maryage. And for sauyng their worship, she thoughte to abate their hote lustes.

And so she lete ordeyne by her subtyl craftes that they had not their ententes neyther with other as in her delytes, vntyl they were maryed. And soo it past on. At after souper was made clene auoydaunce, that euery lord and lady shold goo vnto his rest. But syr Gareth said playnly he wold goo noo ferther than the hallė, for in suche places he said was conuenyent for an arraunt knyzt to take his rest in, and so there were ordeyned grete couches, & theron fether beddes, & there leyde hym doune to slepe, & within a whyle cam

dame Lyones wrapped in a mantel furred with Ermyne & leid her doun besydes syr gareth. And there with alle he beganne to kysse her. And thenne he loked afore hym and there he apperceyued and sawe come an armed knyght with many lyghtes aboute hym, and this knyghte had a longe Gyfarme in his hand, and maade grym countenaunce to smyte hym. Whanne syre Gareth sawe hym come in that wyse, he lepte oute of his bedde and gate in his hand his swerd and lepte strayte toward that knyght. And whanne the knyght sawe syr Gareth come so fyersly vpon hym, he smote hym with a foyne thorou the thycke of the thyz that the wound was a shaftmon brode and had cutte a two many vaynes and senewes. And there with al syr Gareth smote hym vpon the helme suche a buffet that he felle grouelyng, and thenne he lepte ouer hym and vnlaced his helme and smote of his hede fro the body. And thenne he bledde so fast that he myghte not stande, but soo he leid hym doun vpon his bedde, and there he swouned and laye as he had ben dede. Thenne dame Lyones cryed alowde, that her broder syr Gryngamor herd, and came doune. And whan he sawe syr Gareth soo shamefully wounded, he was sore displeasyd and sayd I am shamed that this noble knyghte is thus honoured. Syr sayd syr Gryngamore hou may this be, that ye be here, and thys noble knyghte wounded. Broder she said I can not telle yow. For it was not done by me nor by myn assente. For he is my lord and I am his, and he must be myn husband, therfore my broder I wille that ye wete I shame me not to be with hym, nor to doo hym alle the pleasyr that I can. Syster said syre Gryngamore, and I will that ye wete it and syr Gareth both that it was neuer done by me nor by my assente that this vnhappy dede was done. And there they staunched his bledynge as wel as they myght, and grete sorou made syr Gryngamor and Dame Lyones. And forthe with al came Dame Lynet and toke vp the hede in the syghte of hem alle, and enoynted it with an oynement there as it was smyten of, and in the same wyse she dyd to the other parte there as the hede stak. And thenne she sette it to gyders, and it stak as fast as euer it did. And the knyghte arose lyghtely vp, and the damoysel Lynet put hym in her chambre. Alle this sawe sir Gryngamor and dame Lyones, and soo dyd sir Gareth, and wel he espyed that it was the

damoysel Lynet that rode with hym thorou the peryllous passages. A wel damoysel said syre Gareth I wende wold not haue done as ye haue done. My lord Gareth said Lynet, alle that I haue done I will auowe, and alle that I haue done shal be for youre honoure and worship, and to vs alle. And soo within a whyle syr Gareth was nyghe hole, & waxid lyghte and jocounde, and sange, daunced and gamed, and he and dame Lyones were soo hote in brennynge loue that they made their couenaunte at the tenth nyghte after that she shold come to his bedde. And by cause he was woūded afore, he laid his armour, and his swerd nyghe his beddes syde.

Capitulum xxiii.

Ryght as she promysed she came, and she was not soo soone in his bedde, but she aspyed an armed knyghte comyng toward the bedde, there with alle she warned syr Gareth, and lyghtly thorou the good helpe of Dame Lyones he was armed, and they hurtled to gyders with grete jre & malyce al aboute the halle, and there was grete lyght as it had ben the nombre of xx torches bothe before and behynd, soo that syr Gareth strayned hym, soo that his old wounde braste ageyne on bledyng, but he was hote and couragyous and toke no kepe, but with his grete force he stroke doune that knyghte, and voyded his helme, and strake of his hede. Thenne he hewe the hede in an honderd pyeces. And whan he had done so he took vp alle tho pyeces and threwe hem oute at a wyndow in to the dyches of the castel, and by this done, he was so faynt that vnnethes he myght stande for bledyng. And by thenne he was al most vnarmed, he felle in a dedely swoune in the flore. And thenne dame Lyones cryed soo that syr Gryngamor herd. And whan he cam and fond syr Gareth in that plyte he made grete sorou, & there he awaked sir Gareth, and gaf hym a drynke that releued hym wonderly wel, but the sorou that Dame Lyones made there maye no tonge telle, for she soo faryd with her self as she wold haue dyed. Ryghte soo cam this damoysel Lynet before hem al, and she had fette alle the gobbets of the hede that syr Gareth had throwen out at a wyndowe, and there

she enoynted hem as she had done to fore, & set them to gyder ageyn. Wel damoisel Lynet said syre Gareth, I haue not deserued alle this despyte that ye doo vnto me. sir knyghte she said, I haue no thyng do, but I will auowe. And al that I haue done shalle be to your worship and to vs al. And thenne was syre Gareth staūched of his bledyng. But the leches said, that ther was no man that bare the lyf, shold hele hym thorou oute of his wounde, but yf they heled hym that caused that stroke by enchauntement.

So leue we syr Gareth there with syr Gryngamore and his systers, and torne we vnto kynge Arthur that at the nexte feest of Pentecost helde his feest, and there cam the grene knyzt with fyfty knyghtes, and yelded hem all vnto kynge Arthur. And so there came the reed knyghte his broder, and yelded hym to kyng Arthur and three score knyghtes with hym. Also there came the blewe knyghte broder to them with an honderd knyghtes, & yelded hem vnto kynge Arthur, and the grene knyghtes name was Partolype, and the reed knyghtes name was Perymones, and the blewe knyghtes name was syr Persant of Inde, these thre bretheren told kynge Arthur how they were ouercome by a knyghte that a damoysel had with her, and called hym Beaumayns. Jhesu sayd the kynge I merueylle what knyghte he is, and of what lygnage he is come. He was with me a twelue monethe, and pourely and shamefully he was fostred, and syre kay in scorne named hym Beaumayns. Soo ryghte as the kyng stode soo talkyng with these thre bretheren, there came syr Launcelot du lake and told the kynge that there was come a goodly lord with vj C knyghtes with hym, thenne the kynge wente oute of Carlyon, for there was the feest, and there came to hym this lord, and salewed the kynge in a goodly manere. What wylle ye sayd kyng Arthur, and what is youre erand. Syr he said my name is the reed knyghte of the reed laundes, but my name is syr Ironsyde, and syre wete ye wel, here I am sente to yow, of a knyght that is called Beaumayns, for he wanne me in playne bataille hande for hand, and soo dyd neuer no knyght but he that euer had the better of me this xxx wynter, the whiche commaunded to yelde me to yow at youre wylle, ye are welcom said the kyng, for ye haue ben long a grete foo to me and my Courte, and now I truste to god I shalle soo

entreate you that ye shal be my frend. Syre, bothe I and these fyue honderd knyghtes shal alweyes be at your somons to doo you seruyse as maye lye in oure powers. Jhesu mercy said kyng Arthur I am moche beholdynge vnto that knyght, that hath put soo his body in deuoyre to worshippe me & my Courte. And as to the Ironsyde that art called the reed knyghte of the reed laundes thou arte called a peryllous knyzt. And yf thou wylt holde of me I shal worshippe the and make the knyghte of the table round, but thenne thou must be no more a murtherer. Syre as to that I haue promysed vnto syre Beaumayns neuer more to vse suche custommes, for all the shameful customes that I vsed I dyd at the request of a lady that I loued, and therfor I must goo vnto syr Launcelot and vnto syre Gawayne, and aske them foryeuenes of the euyll wylle I had vnto them, for alle that I put to deth was al only for the loue of syr Launcelot and of syr Gawayne. They ben here now said the kynge afore the, now maye ye saye to them what ye wylle. And thenne he kneled doune vnto syre Launcelot and to syre Gawayne and prayd them of foryeuenes of his enemytee that euer he had ageynste them.

Capitulum xxiiii.

THENNE goodely they said al at ones, god foryeue you and we do, and praye you that ye will telle vs where we may fynde syr Beaumayns. Fayre lordes said syr Ironsyde I can not telle you, for it is ful hard to fynde hym, for suche yong knyghtes as he is one, whanne they be in their aduentures ben neuer abydynge in no place. But to saye the worship that the reed knyghte of the reed laundes and syr persaunt and his broder said of Beaumayns, it was merueil to here. Wel my fayre lordes said kynge Arthur, wete you wel, I shalle do you honour for the loue of syr Beaumayns, and as soone as euer I mete with hym I shalle make you al vpon one day knyghtes of the table round. And as to the syre Persaunt of Inde thou hast ben euer called a ful noble knyghte, and soo haue euer ben thy thre bretheren called. But I merueil said the kyng that I here not of the black knyzt your broder, he was a ful noble knyghte. Syr sayd

Pertolype the grene knyzt syr Beaumayns slewe hym in a recoũtre with his spere, his name was syr Perard that was grete pyte sayd the kynge and soo said many knyghtes. For these four bretheren were ful wel knowen in the courte of kynge Arthur for noble knyghtes, for long tyme they had holden werre ageynst the knyghtes of the round table. Thenne sayd Pertolepe the grene knyghte to the kynge atte a passage of the water of mortayse there encountred syr Beaumayns with two bretheren that euer for the moost party kepte that passage, and they were two dedely knyghtes, and there he slewe the eldest broder in the water, and smote hym vpon the heede suche a buffet that he felle doune in the water, and there he was drouned, & his name was sir Garard le brewse, and after he slewe the other broder vpon the lond, his name was syr Arnold le brewse.

Capitulum xxvi.

Soo thenne the kyng and they wente to mete, and were serued in the best manere. And as they satte at the mete, ther came in the quene of Orkeney with ladyes & knyztes a grete nombre. And thenne syr Gawayn, syr Agrauayn and Gaherys arose, and wente to her, and salewed her vpon their knees, and asked her blessyng. For in xv yere they had not sene her. Thenne she spak on hyghe to her broder kynge Arthur, where haue ye done my yong sone syr Gareth, he was here amongst you a twelue moneth, & ye made a kechyn knaue of hym, the whiche is shame to you all. Allas where haue ye done my dere sone that was my joye and blysse. O dere moder said syr Gawayn I knewe hym not. Nor I said the kynge that now me repenteth, but thanked be god he is preued a worshipful knyghte as ony is now lyuyng of his yeres, & I shal neuer be glad tyl I may fynde hym. A broder sayd the quene vnto kyng Arthur and vnto syr Gawayne and to alle her sones, ye dyd your self grete shame whan ye amongst you kepte my sone in the kechyn and fedde hym lyke a poure hog. Fayr sister said kyng Arthur ye shall ryghte wel wete, I knewe hym not, nor no more dyd syre Gawayn, nor his bretheren, but sythen hit is soo said the kyng that he is thus gone

from vs alle, we must shape a remedy to fynde hym. Also syster me semeth ye myght haue done me to wete of his comynge. And thenne and I had not done wel to hym, ye myzt haue blamed me. For whan he cam to this courte he came lenyng vpon two mens sholders as though he myght not haue gone. And thenne he asked me thre yeftes, and one he asked the same day, that was that I wold gyue hym mete ynough that twelue moneth, and the other two yeftes he asked that day a twelue moneth and that was that he myghte haue thaduenture of the damoysel Lynet, and the thyrd was that syre Launcelot shold make hym knyght whan he desyred hym. And soo I graunted hym alle his desyre, and many in this Courte merueilled that he desyred his sustenaunce for a twelf monethe. And there by we demed, many of vs that he was not come of a noble hous. Syre said the Quene of Orkeney vnto kynge Arthur her broder, wete ye wel that I sente hym vnto you ryghte wel armed and horsed and worshipfully bysene of his body, and gold and syluer plente to spend, it may be said the kynge, but therof sawe we none, sauf that same daye as he departed from vs, knyghtes told me that ther came a dwerf hyder sodenly and broughte hym armour and a good hors ful wel and rychely bysene, and there at we al had merueille fro whens that rychesse came, that we demed al that he was come of men of worship. Broder said the Quene, alle that ye saye I byleue, for euer sythen he was growen, he was merueillously wytted, and euer he was feythful & true of his promesse. But I merueille said she that syre kay dyd mocke hym and scorne hym, and gaf hym that name Beaumayns, yet syr kay said the quene nàmed hym more ryghteously than he wende. For I dare saye and he be on lyue, he is as fair an handed man and wel disposed as ony is lyuynge. Syre said Arthur lete this langage be stylle, and by the grace of god he shal be founde, and he be within this seuen royames, and lete alle this passe and be mery, for he is proued to be a man of worship, and that is my joye.

Capitulum xxvii.

THENNE said syr Gawayne and his bretheren vnto arthur, syre and ye wyl gyue vs leue we wille go and seke oure brother. Nay said syr Launcelot that shalle ye not nede, and so said syr Bawdewyn of Bretayne, for as by oure aduys the kynge shal sende vnto dame Lyones a messager, and praye her that she wille come to the courte in alle the hast that she may, and doubte ye not she wille come. And thēne she may gyue you best coūceille where ye shal fynde hym. This is wel said of you said the kyng. Soo thenne goodely letters were made, and the messager sente forth, that nyghte & day he wente tyl he cam vnto the castel perillous. And thenne the lady dame Lyones was sente for there as she was wyth syr Gryngamor her broder and syre Gareth. And whan she vnderstode this message, she badde hym ryde on his way vnto kynge Arthur, and she wold come after in al goodely hast. Thenne whan she came to syr Gryngamor and to sir Gareth, she told hem al how kyng Arthur had sente for her, that is by cause of me said syr Gareth. Now auyse me said dame Lyones what shalle I saye and in what manere I shal rule me. My lady and my loue said sir Gareth I pray you in no wyse be ye aknowen where I am, but wel I wote my moder is there and alle my bretheren, and they wille take vpon hem to seke me, I wote wel that they doo. But this madame I wold ye sayd and aduysed the kynge whan he questyoned with you of me. Thenne maye ye say, this is your aduys that and hit lyke his good grace, ye wille doo make a crye ayenst the feest of thassumpcion of our lady that what knyghte there preueth hym best he shal welde you and all your land. And yf soo be that he be a wedded man that his wyf shall the degre and a coronal of gold besette with stones of vertue to the valewe of a thousand pound and a whyte Jarfaucon.

Soo dame Lyones departed, and came to kynge Arthur where she was nobly receyued, and there she was sore questyoned of the kyng and of the quene of Orkeney. And she ansuerde where syr Gareth was she coude not telle. But thus moche she said vnto

Arthur, syre I wille lete crye a turnement that shal be done before my castel at the Assumpcion of oure lady, and the crye shal be this that you my lorde Arthur shalt be there, & your knyghtes, and I will puruey that my knyghtes shalle be ageynst yours. And thenne I am sure ye shall here of syr Gareth, this is wel aduysed said kynge Arthur, and soo she departed. And the kynge and she maade grete prouysyon to that turnement. Whan dame Lyones was come to the yle of Auylyon that was the same yle ther as her broder syr Gryngamor dwelte, thenne she told hem al how she had done, and what promyse she had made to kynge Arthur. Allas said syr Gareth, I haue ben soo wounded with vnhappynes sythen I cam in to this castel that I shal not be abyl to doo at that turnement lyke a knyghte, for I was neuer thorouly hole syn I was hurte. Be ye of good chere said the damoysel Lynet, for I vndertake within these xv dayes to make you hole and as lusty as euer ye were. And thenne she leid an oynement & a salue to hym as it pleasyd to her that he was neuer so fressh nor soo lusty. Thenne said the damoysel Lynet, send you vnto syr Persaunt of ynde, and assomone hym and his knyghtes to be here with you as they haue promysed. Also that ye send vnto syr Ironsyde that is the reed knyghte of the reed laundes, and charge hym that he be redy with you with his hole somme of knyghtes, and thenne shalle ye be abyl to matche with kynge Arthur and his knyghtes. Soo this was done & alle knyghtes were sente for vnto the castel peryllous, & thenne the reed knyght ansuerd and said vnto dame Lyones and to syre Gareth, Madame & my lord syr Gareth ye shal vnderstande that I haue ben at the court of kynge Arthur and sire Persaunt of Inde and his bretheren, and there we haue done oure homage as ye commaunded vs. Also syr Ironsyde sayd I haue taken vpon me with syre Persaunt of Inde and his bretheren to hold party ageynst my lord sir Launcelot and the knyghtes of that courte. And this haue I done for the loue of my lady Dame Lyones and you my lord sir Gareth. ye haue wel done said syr Gareth. But wete you wel ye shal be ful sore matched with the moost noble knyghtes of the world, therfor we must purueye vs of goode knyghtes where we may gete them. That is wel said, said sir Persaunt and worshipfully. And soo the crye was made in England, Walis and

scotland, Ireland, Cornewaille, & in alle the oute Iles and in bretayn, and in many countreyes that at the feest of our lady the assumpcion next comyng men shold come to the castel peryllous besyde the yle of Auylyon. And there al the knyghtes that ther came shold haue the choyse whether them lyst to be on the one party with the knyghtes of the castel or on the other party with kynge Arthur. And two monethes was to the daye that the turnement shold be, & so ther cam many good knyztes that were at her large and helde hem for the moost party ageynst kynge Arthur and his knyghtes of the round table, cam in the syde of them of the castel. For syr Epynogrus was the fyrst, and he was the kynges sone of Northumberland, & syr Palamydes the sarasyn was another, and syr Safere his broder, and syre Segwarydes his broder, but they were crystned, and syre Malegryne another, and syr Bryan des les Ilelys a noble knyghte, and syr Grummore gummursum a good knyghte of Scotland, and syr Carados of the dolorous toure a noble knyghte and syr Turquyn his broder, and syr Arnold and syre Gauter two bretheren good knyghtes of Cornewaile, there cam syr Trystram de lyones, and with hym syr Dynadas the seneschal, and sir Saduk, but this syr Tristram was not at that tyme knyght of the table round, but he was one of the best knyghtes of the world. And soo all these noble knyghtes accompanyed hem with the lady of the castel and with the reed knyghte of the reed laundes, but as for sir Gareth he wold not take vpon hym more but as other meane knyghtes.

Capitulum xxviii.

And thenne ther cam with kynge Arthur sir Gawayn, Agrauayne, Gaherys his bretheren. And thenne his neuewes syr Uwayn le blaunche maynys, and syr Aglouale, syr Tor, sir Percyuale de galys, and syre Lamorrak de galis. Thenne came sir Launcelot du lake with his bretheren neuewes and cosyns as sir Lyonel, sir Ector de marys, syr bors de ganys and sir Galyhodyn, syre Galihud and many moo of syre Launcelots blood and syre Dynadan, sir la coote male tayle, his broder a good knyghte, and sir Sagramore a

good knyzt, And al the most party of the round table. Also ther cam with kynge Arthur these knyghtes, the kynge of Irelande, kynge Agwysaunce, and the kyng of Scotland, kyng Carados and kynge Uryens of the londe of gore and kyng Bagdemagus and his sone syr Melyaganus and syr Galahault the noble prynce. Alle these kynges prynces and Erles Barons and other noble knyghtes, as syre Braundyles, syre Uwayne les auowtres, and syre kay, syr Bedeuere, syr Melyot de logrys syr Petypase of Wynkelsee, syr Godelake. alle these came with kynge Arthur and moo that can not ben reherced.

Now leue we of these kynges and knyghtes, and lete vs speke of the grete araye that was made within the castel and aboute the castel for bothe partyes. the lady Dame Lyones ordeyned grete aray vpon her party for her noble knyghtes for al maner of lodgyng and vytaille that cam by land & by water that ther lacked no thynge for her party nor for the other but there was plente to be had for gold and syluer for kynge Arthur and his knyghtes. And thenne ther cam the herbegeours from kynge Arthur for to herberowe hym & his kynges, dukes, Erles, Barons and knyghtes. And thenne syr Gareth prayd dame Lyones and the reed knyghte of the reed laundes, and syr Persant and his broder, and syre Gryngamor that in no wyse ther shold none of them telle not his name and make no more of hym than of the leest knyghte that there was, for he said I wille not be knowen of neyther more ne lesse, neyther at the begynnynge neyther at the endynge.

Thenne Dame Lyones said vnto syr Gareth, syre I wylle lene you a rynge, but I wold pray you as ye loue me hertely lete me haue it ageyne whanne the turnement is done. For that rynge encreaceth my beaute moche more than it is of hym self. And the vertu of my rynge is that, that is grene it will torne to reed, and that is reed it wil torne in lykenes to grene. And that is blewe it wil torne to lykenes of whyte, and that is whyte it wil torne in lykenes to blewe, and so it wil doo of al manere of colours. Also who that bereth my rynge, shalle lese no blood, and for grete loue I wil gyue you thys rynge. Gramercy said syr Gareth myn own lady, for this rynge is passynge mete for me, for hit wille torne al

manere of lykenes that I am in, and that shalle cause me that I shall not be knowen. Thenne syr Gryngamor gaf syr Gareth a bay courser that was a passyng good hors. Also he gafe hym good armoure and sure and a noble swerd that somtyme syre Gryngamors fader wanne vpon an hethen Tyraunt. And soo thus euery knyghte made hym redy to that turnement & kyng Arthur was comen two dayes to fore thassumpcion of our lady. And there was al maner of Royalte of al mynstralsye, that myghte be founde. Also there cam quene Gweneuer and the quene of Orkeney syr Gareths moder. And vpon the assumpcion day whanne masse and matyns were done there were herowdes with trompettes commaunded to blowe to the feld. And soo there came oute syr Epynogrus the kynges sone of Northumberland from the castel, and there encountred with hym syre Sagramor le desyrus, and eyther of hem brake their speres to their handes. And thenne came in syre Palamydes oute of the Castel, and there encountred with hym Gawayne and eyther of hem smote other so hard that bothe the good knyghtes and their horses felle to the erthe. And thenne knyghtes of eyther party rescowed their knyghtes. And thenne cam in syr Safere and syre Segwarydes, bretheren to syre Palamydes, and there encountred syr Agrauayne with syr Safere and syr Galherys encountred with syre Segwarydes. So syr Safere smote doune Agrauayne syr Gawayns broder, and sir Segwarydes syr Saferes broder. And syr Malgryne a knyzt of the Castel encountred with syr Uwayne le blaunche maynys. And there syre Uwayne gaf syr Malgryn a falle, that he had almost broke his neck.

Capitulum xxix.

Thenne syr Bryan de les yles and Grummore grummorssum knyghtes of the Castel (encountred) with syre Aglouale and syre Tor smote doun syr Gromere Gromorson to the erth. Thenne cam in syr Carados of the dolorous toure & syr Turquyne knyghtes of the Castel, and there encoūtred with hem syr Percyuale de galys

& syr Launcelot de galys, that were two bretheren. And there encountred syr Percyuale with syre Caradus, and eyther brake their speres vnto their handes, & thenne syr Turquyn with syre Lamerak, and eyther of hem smote doune others hors and alle to the erthe, and eyther partyes rescowed other, and horsed them ageyn. And syr Arnold and syr Gautere knyghtes of the castel encountred with syre Braundyles and syr kay, and these four knyghtes encountred myghtely, and brake their speres to their handes. Thenne came in syr Trystram, syre Saduk, and syre Dynas knyghtes of the castel, and there encountred syr Trystram wyth syr Bedyuere, and there syr Bedyuere was smyten to the erthe bothe hors and man. And syr Saduk encountred with sir Patypase, and there syr Saduk was ouerthrowen. And there Uwayne les auoutres smote doune syr Dynas the seneschal. Thenne came in syr Persaunt of Inde a knyght of the castel. And there encountred with hym syr Launcelot du lake, and there he smote syr Persaunts hors and man to the erthe. thenne came syr Pertylope from the castel, and there encountred with hym syr Lyonel, and there syr Pertylope the grene knyght smote doune syr Lyonel broder to syr Laũcelot. All this was marked by noble heroudes, who bare hym best, and theire names. And thenne came in to the feld syre Perymones the grene knyght syr Persaunts broder that was a knyght of the Castel, and he encountred with syr Ector de marys, and eyther smote other so hard, that bothe their horses and they felle to the erthe. And thenne came in the reed knyght of the reed laundes and syr Gareth from the castel, and there encountred with hem syr Bors de ganys and syr Bleoberys, and there the reed knyghte and syr Bors smote other so hard that her speres brast and their horses felle grouelynge to the erthe. Thenne syr Blamor brake his spere vpon syr Gareth, but of that stroke syr Blamor felle to the erthe. Whan syr Galyhondyn sawe that, he bad sir gareth kepe hym, & sire gareth smote hym to the erthe. thenne sire Galyhud gate a spere to auenge his broder, & in the same wyse sir gareth serued hym, & sir Dynadan & his broder la cote male tayle, & sir Sagramor desirus, & sir Dodynas le saueage. All these he bare doun with one spere. Whan kyng Aguysaũce of Irland sawe syr Gareth fare so, he

mercuiled what he myzt be y^{t} one tyme semed grene & another tyme at his agcyne comyng he semed blewe. And thus at euery cours that he rode to and fro he chaunged his colour so that ther myghte neyther kynge nor knyghte haue redy cognuyssaunce of hym. Thenne syr Anguyssaunce the kyng of Irland encountred with syr Gareth, and there syr Gareth smote hym from his hors sadyl and all. And thenne came kyng Caradus of Scotland and syr Gareth smote hym doun hors and man. And in the same wyse he serued kyng Uryens of the land of Gore. And thenne came in syr Bawdemagus, and syr Gareth smote hym doune hors and man to the erthe. And Bawdemagus sone Melyganus brake a spere vpon sir Gareth myghtely and knyghtely. And thenne syr Galahaut the noble prynce cryed on hyghe knyghte with the many colours wel hast thou justed. Now make the redy that I maye juste with the. Syre Gareth herd hym, and he gat a grete spere, and soo they encountred to gyder, and there the prynce brake his spere. But syr Gareth smote hym vpon the lyfte syde of the helme, that he relyd here and there, and he had fallen doune had not his men recouerd hym. Soo god me help sayd kynge Arthur that same knyght with the many colours is a good knyghte, wherfor the kynge called vnto hym syr Launcelot, and praid hym to encountre with that knyghte. Syr said Launcelot I may wel fynde in my herte for to forbere hym as at this tyme, for he hath hadde trauail ynough this day, & whan a good knyghte doth soo wel vpon somme day, it is no good knyghtes parte to lette hym of his worship. And namely whan he seeth a Knyght hath done soo grete labour, for peraduenture said syr Launcelot his quarel is here this day, & perauentur he is best byloued with this lady of al that ben here, for I see wel, he payneth hym & enforceth hym to do grete dedes, & therfor said syr launcelot as for me this day he shall haue the honour, though it lay in my power to put hym fro it, I wold not.

Capitulum xxx.

THENNE whanne this was done, there was drawynge of swerdes. And thenne there began a sore turnement. And there dyd syr Lamerak merueyllous dedes of armes, & betwixe syr Lamerak and syre Ironsyde that was the reed knyghte of the reed laũdes there was strong batail, & betwix syre Palamides & Bleoberys there was a strong batail, & sir Gawayne and syr Trystram mette, and there syr Gawayne had the werse, for he pulled syre Gawayne from his hors. And there he was long vpon foote and defouled. Thenne cam in syr Launcelot and he smote syr Turquyne, and he hym, & thenne came syr Caradus his broder, and bothe at ones they assaylled hym, & he as the moost noblest knyght of the world worshipfully foughte with hem bothe, that al men wondred of the noblesse of syr launcelot. And thenne came in syr Gareth and knewe that it was sir launcelot that fought with tho two perylous knyghtes. And thenne syr Gareth came with his good hors and hurtled hem in sonder, & no stroke wold he smyte to syr Launcelot. that aspyed sir launcelot & demed it shold be the good knyghte syre Gareth, & thenne syr Gareth rode here and there, & smote on the ryght hand & on the lyfte hand that all the folke myghte wel aspye where that he rode, and by fortune he mette with his broder syr Gawayn, and there he put syr Gawayne to the werse, for he put of his helme, and so he serued fyue or syxe knyghtes of the rounde table that alle men said, he put hym in the most payne, and best he dyd his deuoyr. For whan syr Trystram beheld hym how he fyrst justed and after foughte so wel with a swerd, Thenne he rode vnto syr Ironsyde and to syre Persaunt of ynde and asked hem by their feythe, what maner a knyghte is yonder knyght that semeth in soo many dyuerse colours. Truly me semeth sayd Trystram that he putteth hym self in grete payne for he neuer ceaseth. Wote ye not what he is sayd syr Ironsyde. No said syr Trystram. thenne shal ye knowe that this is he that loueth the lady of the castel and she hym ageyne, and this is he that wanne me whan I byseged the lady of this castel, and this is he that wanne syr Persaunt of ynde, and his thre bretheren. What is his

name sayd syr Trystram and of what blood is he come. he was called in the courte of kyng Arthur Beaumayns, but his ryzt name is sir Gareth of Orkeney broder to sir Gawayn. by my hede said sir Tristram he is a good knizt and a bygge man of armes, & yf he be yong he shalle preue a ful noble knyghte. he is but a child they all saide & of syr Launcelot he was made knyzt, therfor he is mykel the better said Trystram. And thenne syr Trystram, syr Ironsyde, syr Persaunt and his broder rode to gyders for to helpe sir gareth, & thenne there were gyuen many strong strokes. And thenne syr Gareth rode oute on the one syde to amende his helme, & thenne said his dwerf take me your ryng that ye lese it not whyle that ye drynke. And so whan he had dronken he gat on his helme, & egerly took his hors & rode in to the felde, & lefte his rynge with his dwerf, and the dwerf was gladde the ryng was from hym, for thenne he wist wel he shold be knowen. And thenne whan syr Gareth was in the felde all folkes sawe hym wel, & playnly that he was in yelowe colours, & there he rassyd of helmes & pulled doun knyztes that kynge Arthur had merueylle what knyzt he was, for the kyng sawe by his here that it was the same knyght.

Capitulum xxxi.

But by fore he was in so many colours and now he is but in one colour that is yelowe. Now goo said kyng Arthur vnto dyuerse heroudes and ryde aboute hym & aspye what maner knyght he is, for I haue speryd of many knyghtes this day that ben vpon his party, and all saye they knowe hym not. And so an heroude rode nyhe Gareth as he coude, and there he sawe wryten aboute his helme in golde, This helme is syr Gareth of Orkeney. Thenne the heroude cryed as he were wood, & many heroudes with hym, This is syre gareth of Orkeney in the yelowe armes that by all kynges and knyghtes of Arthurs beheld hym & awayted, & thenne they pressyd al to beholde hym, & euer the heroudes cryed this is syre gareth of Orkeney kyng Lots sone. and whan syr gareth aspyed that he was

discoueryd, thenne he doubled his strokes, & smote doune syr Sagramore & his broder sir gawayn. O broder saide sir gawayn I wende ye wolde not haue stryken me. so whan he herd hym say so he thrang here & there, & so with grete payne he gat out of the prees, and there he mette with his dwerf. O boye said syr gareth thou hast begyled me foule this day that thou kepte my rynge. Gyue it me anone ageyn that I may hyde my body with al, and soo he tooke it hym. And thenne they all wist not where he was become, and syr gawayn had in maner aspyed where syr Gareth rode, and thenne he rode after with alle his myghte. that aspyed syr Gareth and rode lyghtely in to the forest that syr Gawayn wist not where he was become. And whan syr Gareth wyst that syr Gawayn was past, he asked the dwerf of best counceil. Syr said the dwerf, me semeth it were best now that ye are escaped fro spyeng that ye send my lady dame lyones her rynge. It is wel aduysed said syr Gareth, now haue it here and bere it to her, And saye that I recommaunde me vnto her good grace, and saye her I will come whan I maye, and I pray her to be true and feythful to me as I wil be to her. Syr said the dwerf it shal be done as ye commaunde. and soo he rode his waye and dyd his eraund vnto the lady. Thenne she said where is my knyghte syr Gareth. Madame said the dwerf he bad me saye, that he wold not be long from you. And soo lyghtely the dwerf cam ageyne vnto syr Gareth that wold ful fayne haue had a lodgyng, for he had nede to be reposed. And thenne felle there a thonder and a rayne as heuen and erthe shold goo to gyder. And syr Gareth was not a lytyl wery, for of all that day he had but lytel rest neyther his hors nor he. So this syr Gareth rode soo longe in that forest vntyl the nyghte came. And euer it lyghtned and thondred as it had ben woode. At the last by fortune he came to a Castel, and there he herd the waytes vpon the wallys.

Capitulum xxxii.

THENNE syr Gareth rode vnto the barbycan of the castel, and praid the porter fayr to lete hym in to the castel. The porter ansuerd vngoodely ageyne, and saide thow getest no lodgyng here. Fayr syr say not soo for I am a knyzte of kynge Arthurs, & pray the lord or the lady of this castel to gyue me herberow for the loue of kynge Arthur. Thenne the porter wente vnto the duchesse, and told her how ther was a knyghte of kyng Arthurs wold haue herberowe. lete hym in said the duchesse, for I wille see that knyghte. And for kyng Arthurs sake he shalle not be herberoules. Thenne she yode vp in to a toure ouer the gate with grete torche lyght. Whan sir Gareth sawe that torche lyghte he cryed on hyhe whether thou be lord or lady, gyaunt or champyon, I take no force so that I may haue herberowe this nyghte, & yf hit so be that I must nedes fyghte, spare me not to morne when I haue restyd me, for bothe I and myn hors ben wery. Syr knyghte said the lady thou spekest knyghtly and boldly, but wete thou wel the lord of this castel loueth not kyng Arthur, nor none of his court, for my lord hath euer ben ageynst hym, and therfor thou were better not to come within this castel. For and thou come in this nyghte, thou must come in vnder suche fourme that where someuer thou mete my lord by styz or by strete, thou must yelde the to hym as prysoner. Madame said syre Gareth what is your lord and what is his name. sir my lordes name is the duke de la rouse. Wel madame said syr Gareth I shal promyse yow in what place I mete your lord I shalle yelde me vnto hym and to his good grace with that I vnderstande he wille do me no harme. And yf I vnderstand that he wille I wil releace my self and I can with my spere and my swerd. ye say wel said the duchesse, and thenne she lete the drawe brydge doune, and soo he rode in to the halle, and there he alyghte, and his hors was ledde in to a stable, & in the halle he vnarmed hym, & saide madame I will not oute of this halle thys nyghte. And whan it is daye lyght, lete see who wil haue adoo with me, he shal fynde me redy. Thenne was he sette vnto souper, and had many good dysshes.

thenne syr Gareth lyst wel to ete, and knyghtely he ete his mete, and egerly, there was many a fair lady by hym, & some said they neuer sawe a goodlyer man nor so wel of etynge. thenne they made hym passyng good chere, & shortly whan he had souped his bedde was made there, so he rested hym al nyghte. And on the morne he herd masse & brake his fast & toke his leue at the duchesse, & at them al, & thanked her goodely of her lodgyng & of his good chere, & thenne she asked hym his name. Madame he saide truly my name is Gareth of Orkeney, & some men calle me Beaumayns. thene knewe she wel it was the same knyzt that fouzt for dame lyones. so sir Gareth departed & rode vp in to a montayne, & ther mette hym a knyghte, his name was syr Bendelayne and sayd to syr Gareth thou shalt not passe this way, for outher thou shalt juste with me or els be my prysoner. Thenne wille I juste said syr Gareth. And soo they lete their horses renne, and there syr Gareth smote hym thorou oute the body, and syr Bendalyne rode forth to his castel there besyde and there dyed. So syr gareth wold haue rested hym, and he cam rydynge to Bendalaynis castel. Thenne his knyghtes and seruauntes aspyed that it was he that had slayne their lord. Thenne they armed xx good men and cam oute and assailled syr gareth, and soo he had no spere but his swerd, and put his shelde afore hym, and there they brake their speres vpon hym, and they assailled hem passyngly sore. But euer syr gareth deffended hym as a knyght.

Capitulum xxxiii.

Soo whan they sawe that they myghte not ouercome hym, they rode from hym, and took their counceylle to slee his hors, and soo they cam in vpon syr gareth, and with speres they slewe his hors, and thenne they assailled hym hard. But whan he was on foote, there was none that he faughte but he gaf him suche a buffet that he dyd neuer recouer. So he slewe hem by one and one tyl they were but foure, and there they fledde, and sire gareth took a good hors that was one of theirs and rode his waye. Thenne he rode a grete paas

til that he came to a castel and there he herd moche mornynge of ladyes and gentylwymmen, so ther cam by hym a page. What noyse is this said syr gareth that I here within this castel. Syre knyghte said the page here ben within this castel thyrtty ladyes and alle they be wydowes. For here is a knyght that wayteth dayly vpon this castel, and his name is the broun knyght withoute pyte, and he is the perylloust knyght that now lyueth. And therfor sir said the page I rede you flee. Nay said sir gareth I wille not flee though thou be aferd of hym. And thenne the page sawe where came the broune knyghte, loo said the page yonder he cometh. lete me dele with him said syre gareth. And whan eyther of other had a syghte they lete theyr horses renne, and the broune knyghte brake his spere and sir gareth smote hym thorou oute the body that he ouerthrewe hym to the ground stark dede. So sir gareth rode in to the castel & praid the ladyes yt he myzt repose hym. allas said the ladyes ye may not be lodged here, make hym good chere said the page for this knyghte hath slayne your enemy. thenne they al made hym good chere as laye in their power. But wete ye wel they maade hym good chere for they myghte none otherwyse doo for they were but poure. And so on the morne he wente to masse, and there he sawe the thyrtty ladyes knele, and lay grouelyng vpon dyuerse tombes makynge grete dole and sorowe. Thenne syr Gareth wyst wel that in the tombes lay theire lordes. Fayre ladyes said syr Gareth, ye must at the next feeste of Pentecost be at the court of kynge Arthur, and saye that I syr Gareth sente you thyder. We shal doo this said the ladyes. Soo he departed, and by fortune he came to a mountayne, & there he found a goodely knyght that badde hym abyde syr knyghte and juste with me. What are ye said syr Gareth. My name is said he the duke de la rowse. A syr ye ar the same knyghte that I lodged ones in your Castel. And there I made promyse vnto your lady that I shold yelde me vnto yow. A said the duke, arte thou that proud knyghte that proferest to fyghte with my knyghtes, therfore make the redy for I wil haue adoo with you. Soo they lete their horses renne, and ther syr Gareth smote the duke doune from his hors. But the duke lyghtly auoyded his hors, and dressid his shelde and drewe hys swerd, and bad syr Gareth alyghte and fyghte with

hym. Soo he dyd alyghte, and they dyd grete batail to gyders more than an houre, and eyther hurte other ful sore. Att the last sir Gareth gat the duke to the erthe, and wold haue slayn hym, and thenne he yelde hym to hym. Thenne must ye goo said sir Gareth vnto syr Arthur my lord at the next feest and saye that I sir Gareth of Orkeney sente you vnto hym. hit shal be done said the duke, and I wil doo to yow homage and feaute with an C knyztes with me, and alle the dayes of my lyf to doo you seruyse where ye wille commaunde me.

Capitulum xxxiiii.

Soo the duke departed, and sir Gareth stode there alone and there he sawe an armed knyght comyng toward hym. Thenne syre Gareth toke the dukes shelde, and mounted vpon horsbak, and soo withoute bydyng they ranne to gyder as it had ben the thonder. And there that knyzt hurt syr Gareth vnder the syde with his spere. And thenne they alyghte, and drewe their swerdes, and gafe grete strokes that the blood trayled to the ground. And soo they foughte two houres. At the last ther came the damoysel Lynet that somme men calle the damoysel saueage, and she came rydynge vpon an ambelynge meule, and there she cryed al on hyghe, syr Gawayne syr Gawayne leue thy fyghtynge with thy broder syre Gareth. And whan he herd her saye soo he threwe aweye hys shelde and hys swerd, and ranne to syre Gareth, and tooke hym in his armes, and sythen kneled doune and asked hym mercy. What are ye said syr Gareth that ryght now were soo stronge and soo myghty, and now so sodenly yelde you to me. O Gareth I am your broder syr Gawayn that for youre sake haue had grete sorou and labour. Thenne syr Gareth vnlaced his helme, and knelyd doune to hym, and asked hym mercy. thenne they rose both and enbraced eyther other in their armes and wepte a grete whyle or they myghte speke, and eyther of them gaf other the pryce of the bataille. And there were many kynde wordes bitwene hem. Allas my faire broder said sir gawayn perde I owe of ryghte to worshippe you, and ye were not my broder, for ye haue

worshipped kyng Arthur and all his courte, for ye haue sente me mo worshipful knyghtes this twelue moneth than syxe the best of the round table haue done excepte sir Launcelot. Thenne cam the damoysel saueage that was the lady Lynet that rode with sir gareth soo longe, and there she dyd staunche sir gareths woundes, and sir gawayns. Now what wille ye doo said the damoysel saueage, me semeth that it were wel do yᵗ Arthur had wetyng of you both, for your horses are soo brysed that they may not bere. Now faire damoysel said syr Gawayne, I praye you ryde vnto my lord myn vnkel kynge Arthur, and telle hym what aduenture is to me betyd here, and I suppose he wille not tary long. Thenne she tooke her meule and lyghtly she came to kynge Arthur, that was but two myle thens. And whan she had told hym tydynges the kynge bad gete hym a palfroy. And whan he was vpon his bak he badde the lordes and ladyes come after who that wold, and there was sadelyng and brydelyng of quenes horses and prynces horses, & wel was hym that soonest myght be redy. Soo whan the kynge came there as they were he sawe syr Gawayn and syr Gareth sytte vpon a lytel hylle syde, & thenne the kynge auoyded his hors. And whanne he cam nyghe syre Gareth, he wold haue spoken but he myghte not, and therwith he sanke doune in a swoune for gladnesse, and soo they starte vnto theyr vnkyl, and requyred hym of his good grace to be of good comforte. Wete ye wel the kyng made grete ioye and many a pyteous complaynte he made to syr Gareth. And euer he wepte as he had ben a chyld. With that cam his moder the quene of Orkeney dame Morgause. And whan she sawe syr Gareth redely in the vysage she myghte not wepe but sodenly felle doun in a swoune, and lay there a grete whyle lyke as she had ben dede. And thenne syr Gareth recomforted his moder in suche wyse that she recouerd and made good chere. Thenne the kynge commaunded that al maner of knyghtes that were vnder his obeissaunce shold make their lodgyng ryght there for the loue of his neuewes. And soo it was done and al manere of purueaunce purueyd that ther lacked nothyng that myghte be goten of tame nor wylde for gold or syluer. And thenne by the meanes of the damoysel Saueage syr Gawayne and syr Gareth were heled of their woundes, and there they soiourned

eyght dayes. Thenne said kyng Arthur vnto the damoysel saueage I merueylle that your syster Dame Lyones cometh not here to me, and in especyal that she cometh not to vysyte her knyghte my neuewe syre Gareth that hath had soo moche trauaille for her loue. My lord said the damoysel Lynet ye must of your good grace hold her excused. For she knoweth not that my lord syr Gareth is here. Go thēne for her said kynge Arthur that we may be apoynted what is best to (be) done accordyng to the plesyr of my neuewe. Syr said the damoysel that shal be done, and soo she rode vnto her syster. And as lyghtely as she myght made her redy & she cam on the morne with her broder syr Gryngamor, and with her xl knyztes. And so whan she was come she had alle the chere that myghte be done bothe of the kynge and of many other kynges and quenes.

Capitulum xxxv.

And amonge alle these ladyes she was named the fayrest and pyereles. Thenne whanne syr Gawayn sawe her, there was many a goodely loke and goodely wordes that alle men of worship had ioye to beholde them. Thenne cam kynge Arthur and many other kynges and dame Gweneuer & the quene of Orkeney. And there the kyng asked his neuew syre Gareth whether he wold haue that lady as peramour or to haue her to his wyf. My lord wete yow wel that I loue her aboue al ladyes lyuynge. Now fayre lady said kyng Arthur what say ye. Moost noble kynge said dame Lyones wete yow wel that my lord syr Gareth is to me more leuer to haue and welde as my husband than ony kyng or prynce that is crystned, and yf I maye not haue hym I promyse yow I wylle neuer haue none. For my lord Arthur sayd dame Lyones wete ye wel he is my fyrst loue and he shal be the laste. And yf ye wil suffre hym to haue his wyl and free choyse I dare saye he wylle haue me. That is trouthe said syr Gareth. And I haue not you and weld not you as my wyf, there shal neuer lady ne gentylwoman reioyce me. What neuewe said the kynge is the wynde in that dore, for wete ye wel I wold not for the stynte of my croune to be causar to withdrawe your hertes. And

wete ye wel ye can not loue so wel but I shal rather encreace hit than dystresse hit. And also ye shal haue my loue and my lordship in the vttermest wyse that may lye in my power. And in the same wyse said sir Gareths moder. thenne there was made a prouysyon for the day of maryge, and by the kynges aduyse it was prouyded that it shold be at Mychelmas folowyng at kynkenadon by the see syde, for ther is a plentyful countrey. And soo it was cryed in al the places thurgh the royamme. And thenne syr Gareth sent his somones to alle these knyghtes and ladyes that he had wonne in batail to fore that they shold be at his day of maryage at kynkenadon by the sandys. And thenne dame Lyones and the damoysel Lynet with syr Gryngamor rode to theire castel, and a goodely and a ryche rynge she gaf to syr Gareth, and he gaf her another. And kyng Arthur gaf her a ryche bee of gold, and soo she departed, and kyng Arthur and his felauship rode toward Kynkenadon, and syr Gareth broughte his lady on the way, & so cam to the kyng ageyne and rode wyth hym. Lord the grete chere that syr launcelot made of sir Gareth and he of hym, for there was neuer no knyght that syr gareth loued so wel as he dyd syr Launcelot, and euer for the most party he wold be in syr launcelots company, for after syr Gareth had aspyed sir Gawayns condycions he withdrewe hym self fro his broder syr Gawayns felauship, for he was vengeable, and where he hated he wold be auengyd with murther and that hated syr Gareth.

Capitulum xxxvi.

Soo hit drewe faste to Mychelmas, and thyder came dame Lyones the lady of the castel peryllous and her syster dame Lynet with syre gryngamor her broder with hem. For he had the conduyte of these ladyes. And there they were lodged at the deuyse of kyng Arthur. And vpon mychelmas day the Bisshop of Caunterbury made the weddyng betwixe syr gareth and the lady Lyones with grete solempnyte, and kyng Arthur made gaherys to wedde the damoysel saueage, that was dame Lynet. and kyng Arthur made syr Agrauayne to wedde dame Lyones nees a fayr lady, her name was

dame Laúrel. And so whan this solemnacion was done, thenne cam in the grene knyghte syr Pertylope with thyrtty knyghtes, and there he dyd homage and feaute to syr gareth and these knyghtes to hold of hym for euermore. Also sir Pertilope said I pray you that at this feest I maye be your chamberlayne. With a good wil said syr gareth, syth it lyketh you to take soo symple an offyce. Thenne come in the reed knyghte with thre score knyghtes with hym, and dyde to syr Gareth homage and feaute, and alle tho knyghtes to hold of hym for euermore. And thenne this syr Perymonyes praide sir gareth to graunte hym to be his chyef botteler at that hyghe feest. I wil wel saide sir gareth that ye haue this offyce and it were better. Thenne came in syr Persant of Inde with an C knyghtes with hym, and there he dyd homage and feaute, and al his knyghtes shold doo hym seruyse, and hold their londes of hym for euer, and there he prayd syr Gareth to make hym his Sewar chyef at the feest. I will wel said syr Gareth that ye haue it & it were better. Thenne cam the duk de la rowse with an C knyghtes with hym, and there he dyd homage and feaute to syr Gareth, and soo to hold theire londes of hym for euer. And he requyred syr Gareth that he myght serue hym of the wyn that day of that feest. I wil wel sayd syr Gareth and it were better. Thenne came in the reed knyzte of the reed laundes that was syr Ironsyde, and he broughte with hym thre honderd knyghtes, and there he dyd homage & feaute, and al these knyghtes to hold their landes of hym for euer. And thenne he asked syr Gareth to be his keruer. I will wel said syr Gareth and it please you. Thenne came in to the courte thyrtty ladyes, and alle they semed wydowes, and tho thyrtty ladyes broughte with hem many fayre gentylwymmen. And alle they kneled doune at ones vnto kyng arthur and vnto syr Gareth, and there al tho ladyes told the kyng how syr Gareth delyuerd hem from the dolorous toure, and slewe the broune knyght withoute pyte. And therfore we and oure heyres for euermore wille doo homage vnto syr Gareth of Orkeney. So thenne the kynges and quenes, prynces, & erlys Barons and many bold knyghtes wente vnto mete, & well maye ye wete there were al maner of mete plentyuously, alle manere rules and games with al manere of mynstralsy that was vsed in tho dayes. Also ther was grete justes thre dayes. But the

kynge wold not suffre syre Gareth to juste by cause of his newe bryde, for as the frensshe book sayth that dame Lyones desyred of the kynge that none that were wedded shold juste at that feest. Soo the fyrst daye there justed sir lamerak de galys, for he ouerthrewe thyrtty knyghtes, & did passyng merueillously dedes of armes, and thenne kyng Arthur made syr Persaunt and his two bretheren knyghtes of the round table to their lyues ende, and gaf hem grete londes. Also the second daye there justed Trystram best, and he ouerthrew fourty knyghtes, and dyd there merueillous dedes of armes. And there kynge Arthur made Ironsyde that was the reed knyghte of the reed laundes a knyghte of the table round to his lyues ende, and gaf hym grete landes. The thyrd day there justed syr launcelot du lake, and he ouerthrewe fyfty knyghtes and dyd many merueyllous dedes of armes that all men wondred on hym. And there kynge Arthur made the duke de la rouse a knyghte of the round table to his lyues ende, and gaf hym grete landes to spende. But whan this justes were done, syr Lamerak and syr Trystram departed sodenly, & wold not be knowen, for the whiche kyng Arthur and all the court were sore displeasyd. And soo they helde the courte fourty dayes with grete solempnyte. And this syr Gareth was a noble knyghte and a wel rulyd, and fayre langaged.

Thus endeth this tale of syr Gareth of Orkeney that wedded dame Lyones of the castel perylous. And also syr Gaherys wedded her syster dame Lynet, that was called the damoysel saueage. And syr Agrauayne wedded dame Laurel a fayr lady and grete and myghty landes with grete rychesse gaf with them kyng Arthur that ryally they myght lyue tyl their lyues ende.

Here foloweth the viii book the which is the first book of sir Tristram de Lyones, & who was his fader & his moder, & hou he was borne and fosteryd. And how he was made knyghte.

Capitulum primum.

IT was a kyng that hyghte Melyodas, and he was lord and kynge of the countre of Lyonas. And this Melyodas was a lykely knyght as ony was that tyme lyuynge. And by fortune he wedded kynge Markys syster of Cornewaille And she was called Elyzabeth that was callyd bothe good and fair. And at that tyme kynge Arthur regned, and he was hole kynge of Englond, Walys and Scotland and of many other royammes how be it there were many kynges that were lordes of many countreyes, but alle they held their landes of kyng Arthur, for in Walys were two kynges, and in the north were many kynges. And in Cornewail and in the West were two kynges. Also in Irland were two or thre kynges, and al were vnder the obeissaunce of kyng Arthur. So was the kynge of Fraunce and the kyng of Bretayn and all the lordshippes vnto Rome. So whan this kyng Melyodas hadde ben with his wyf, within a whyle she waxid grete with child and she was a ful meke lady, and wel she

loued her lord, & he her ageyne, soo there was grete ioye betwixe them. Thenne ther was a lady in that countrey that had loued kynge Melyodas longe, and by no meane she neuer coude gete his loue therfore she lete ordeyne vpon a day as kynge Melyodas rode on huntynge, for he was a grete chacer, and there by an enchauntement she made hym chace an herte by hym selfe alone, til that he came to an old Castel, and there anone he was taken prysoner by the lady that hym loued. Whanne Elyzabeth kyng Melyodas myst her lord, and she was nyghe oute of her wytte and also as grete with child as she was she took a gentylwoman with her, and ranne in to the forest to seke her lord.

And whanne she was ferre in the forest she myghte no ferther for she byganne to trauaille fast of her child. And she had many grymly throwes, her gentylwoman halp her alle that she myghte. And soo by myracle of oure lady of heuen she was delyuerd with grete paynes. But she had taken suche cold for the defaute of helpe that depe draughtes of deth toke her, that nedes she must dye and departe oute of this world, ther was none other bote. And whanne this quene Elyzabeth sawe that ther was none other bote, thenne she made grete dole, and said vnto her gentylwoman, whan ye see my lord kyng Melyodas recommaunde me vnto hym, and telle hym what paynes I endure here for his loue, and how I must dye here for his sake for defaute of good helpe, and lete hym wete that I am ful sory to departe out of this world fro hym, therfor pray hym to be frende to my soule.

Now lete me see my lytel child, for whome I haue had alle this sorowe. And whanne she sawe hym she said thus, A my lytel sone thou hast murthered thy moder, and therfore I suppose thou that arte a murtherer soo yong, thou arte ful lykely to be a manly man in thyn age. And by cause I shal dye of the byrthe of the, I charge the gentylwoman, that thou pray my lord kynge Melyodas that whan he is crystned lete calle hym Trystram that is as moch to saye, as a sorouful byrthe. And ther with this quene gafe vp the ghoost and dyed. Thenne the gentylwoman leyd her vnder an vmbre of a grete tree, and thenne she lapped the chyld as wel as she myght for cold. Ryghte soo ther came the Barons folowynge after the quene.

And whan they sawe that she was dede, and vnderstood none other but the kynge was destroyed.

Capitulum secundum.

THENNE certayne of them wold haue slayne the child, by cause they wold haue ben lordes of the countrey of Lyonas. But thenne thorou the faire speche of the gentylwoman, and by the meanes that she made, the moost party of the Barons wold not assente ther to. And thenne they lete cary home the dede quene, and moche dole was made for her. Thenne this meane whyle Merlyn delyuerd kynge Melyodas out of pryson on the morne after his quene was dede. And so when the kynge was come home, the moost party of the barons made grete ioye. But the sorou that the kyng made for his quene that myghte no tong telle.

Soo thenne the kynge lete entere her rychely, and after he lete crystene his child as his wyf had commaunded afore her deth. And thenne he lete calle hym Trystram the sorouful borne child. Then the kynge Melyodas endured seuen yeres withoute a wyf. And alle this tyme Trystram was nourysshed wel. Thenne hit befelle that kynge Melyodas wedded kynge Howels doughter of Bretayne, and anone she hadde children of kynge Melyodas, thenne was she heuy and wrothe, that her children shold not reioyce the Countrey of Lyones, wherfor this quene ordeyned for to poysone yong Tristram. So she lete poyson be put in a pyece of syluer in the chamber where as Trystram and her children were to gyders, vnto that entente that whanne Trystram were thursty he shold drynke that drynke. And so hit felle vpon a daye the quenes sone as he was in that chamber, aspyed the pyece with poyson, and he wende hit hadde ben good drynke, and by cause the child was thursty he tooke the pyece with poyson and dranke frely, and there with al sodenly the child brast & was dede. Whanne the quene Melyodas wyst of the dethe of her sone wete ye wel that she was heuy. But yet the kyng vnderstode no thynge of her treason. Not withstandynge the quene wold not leue this, but efte she lete ordeyne more poyson, and putte hit in a

pyece. And by fortune kyng Melyodas her husband fond the pyece with wyn where was the poyson, and he that was moche thursty took the pyece for to drynke ther oute. And as he wold 'haue dronken thereof, the Quene aspyed hym, and thenne she ranne vnto hym, and pulled the pyece from hym sodenly. The kyng merueilled why she dyd soo, and remembryd hym how her sone was sodenly slayne with poyson. And thenne he took her by the hand and sayd, thou fals traitresse thou shalte telle me what manere of drynke this is, or els I shalle slee the. And ther with he pulled oute his swerd, and sware a grete othe that he shold slee her, but yf she told hym trouthe. A mercy my lord sayde she, and I shalle telle you alle. And thenne she told hym why she wold haue slayne Trystram, by cause her chyldren shold reioyce his land. Wel said kyng Melyodas, and therfor shal ye haue the lawe. And soo she was dampned by the assente of the Barons to be brent, and thenne was ther made a grete fyre, & ryght as she was at the fyre to take her execucion, yong Trystram knelyd afore kynge Melyodas, and besought hym to gyue hym a bone. I wylle wel said the kynge ageyne. Thenne saide yonge Trystram gyue me the lyf of thy quene my stepmoder. That is vnryghtfully asked said kyng Melyodas, for thou oughte of ryght to hate her, for she wold haue slayne the with that poyson and she myghte haue hadde her wille. And for thy sake moost is my cause that she sholde dye. Syr saide Trystram as for that I byseche you of your mercy that ye wille forgyue hit her. And as for my parte god forgyue it her and I doo, and soo moche it lyked your hyhenes to graunte me my bone, for goddes loue I requyre you hold your promyse. Sythen hit is soo said the kynge I wille that ye haue her lyf, thenne said the kynge I gyue her to you, and go ye to the fyre and take her, and doo with her what ye wylle. Soo syre Trystram wente to the fyre, and by the commaundement of the kyng delyuerd her from the dethe. But after that kynge Melyodas wold neuer haue adoo with her as at bedde and borde. But by the good meanes of yong Trystram he made the kynge and her accorded. But thenne the kynge wold not suffre yonge Trystram to abyde no lenger in his courte.

Capitulum iii.

And thenne he lete ordeyne a gentylman that was wel lerned and taughte, his name was gouernayle, and thenne he sente yonge Trystram with Gouernayle in to Fraunce to lerne the langage, and nurture and dedes of armes. And there was Trystram more than seuen yeres.

And thenne whanne he wel couthe speke the langage and hadde lerned alle that he myght lerne in that countreyes, thenne he came home to his fader kynge Melyodas ageyne, and so Trystram lerned to be an harper passynge alle other that there was none suche called in no countrey, and soo in harpynge & on Instrumentys of musyke he applyed hym in his yongthe for to lerne. And after as he growed in myght and strengthe he laboured euer in huntynge and in haukynge soo that neuer gentylman more that euer we herd rede of. And as the book sayth, he beganne good mesures of blowyng of beestes of venery and beestes of chace, and alle manere of vermayns, and alle these termes we haue yet of haukyng and huntyng. And therfore the book of venery, of haukynge and huntynge is called the book of syr Trystram. Wherfor as me semeth alle gentylmen that beren old armes oughte of ryght to honoure syre Trystram for the goodly termes that gentilmen haue and vse, and shalle to the daye of dome, that there by in a maner alle men of worship maye disseuer a gentylman fro a yoman, and from a ȳoman a vylayne. For he that gentyl is wylle drawe hym vnto gentil tatches, and to folowe the custommes of noble gentylmen. Thus syr Trystram endured in Cornewaile vntyl he was bygge, and stronge, of the age of xviiii yeres. And thenne the kynge Melyodas had grete ioye of syr Trystram, and soo had the quene his wyfe. For euer after in her lyf by cause syre Trystram saued her from the fyre she dyd neuer hate hym more after, but loued hym euer after, and gaf Trystram many grete yeftes for euery estate loued hym, where that he wente.

Capitulum quartum.

THENNE it befelle that kynge Anguysshe of Irland, sente vnto kynge Marke of Cornewaile for his truage that Cornewaile had payed many wynters. And alle that tyme kynge Marke was behynde of the truage for seuen yeres. And kyng Marke and his Barons gaf vnto the messager of Irland these wordes and ansuere that they wold none paye, and bad the messagyer goo vnto his Kynge Anguysshe, and telle hym we wille paye hym no truage, but telle youre lord, and he wille alweyes haue truage of vs of Cornewaile, bydde hym sende a trusty knyghte of his land, that wille fyghte for his ryght, and we shalle fynde another for to defende oure ryght. With this ansuer the messagers departed in to Irland. And whanne kynge Anguysh vnderstood the ansuere of the messagers, he was wonderly wroth. And thenne he callyd vnto hym syr Marhaus the good knyght that was nobly preued, and a knyghte of the table round. And this Marhaus was broder vnto the quene of Irland. Thenne the kynge sayd thus, Fayre broder sir Marhaus I praye yow goo in to Cornewaile for my sake and do bataille for our truage that of ryght we oughte to haue, and what someuer ye spende ye shalle haue suffyciently more than ye shal nede. Syre saide Marhaus wete ye wel that I shalle not be lothe to doo bataille in the ryght of you and your land with the best knyght of the table rounde, for I knowe them for the moost party what ben theire dedes, and for to auaunce my dedes and to encreace my worship I wylle ryght gladly goo vnto thys iourneye for oure ryghte.

Soo in alle haste there was made purueaunce for syr marhaus, and he hadde al thynge that to hym neded, and soo he departed out of Irland, and arryued vp in Cornewaile euen fast by the castel of Tyntagil. And whan kynge Mark vnderstood that he was there arryued to fyghte for Irland. Thenne made kynge marke grete sorou whan he vnderstood that the good and noble knyghte sire Marhaus was come. For they knew no knyght that durste haue adoo with hym. For at that tyme syre Marhaus was called one of the famosest and renoumed knyghtes of the world.

And thus syre Marhaus abode in the see, and euery daye he sente vnto kynge Marke for to paye the truage that was behynde of seuen yere, outher els to fynde a knyght to fyghte with hym for the truage. This maner of message syre Marhaus sente dayly vnto kynge Marke. Thenne they of Cornewayle lete make cryes in euery place that what knyght wold fyghte for to saue the truage of Cornewaile he sholde be rewarded soo that he sholde fare the better the terme of hys lyf. Thenne some of the Barons sayde to kynge Marke, and counceiled hym to sende to the courte of Kynge Arthur for to seke syre Launcelot du lake that was that tyme named for the merueilloust Knyght of alle the worlde. Thenne there were somme other Barons that counceylled the Kynge not to doo soo & said that it was laboure in vayn, by cause syr Marhaus was a knyght of the round table, therefor ony of hem will be loth to haue adoo with other, but yf hit were ony knyght at his owne request wold fyghte dysguysed and unknowen. Soo the kynge and alle his barons assented that it was no bote to seke ony knyght of the round table. This meane whyle came the langage and the noyse vnto kynge Meliodas hou that sire Marhaus abode bataille faste by Tyntagil. And how kyng Mark couthe fynde no maner knyghte to fyghte for hym. Whan yong Trystram herd of thys, he was wrothe and sore ashamed that ther durst no knyghte in Cornewaile haue adoo with syr Marhaus of Irland.

Capitulum quintum.

There with al Trystram wente vnto his fader Kynge Meliodas and asked hym counceil what was best to doo for to recouer Cornewaile from truage. For as me semeth said sir Tristram it were shame that syr Marhaus the quenes broder of Irland shold goo aweye onles that he were foughten with alle. As for that said kyng Meliodas wete you wel sone Tristram that syre Marhaus is called one of the best knyghtes of the world and knyghte of the table round. And therfore I knowe no knyghte in this countre that is able to matche with hym. Allas saide syre Tristram that I am not made knyght.

And yf sir Marhaus shold thus departe in to Irland, god lete me neuer haue worship and I were made knyght I shold matche hym. And syr said Trystram I pray you gyue me leue to ryde to kynge Mark, and soo ye be not displeasyd, of kynge Mark wille I be made Knyght. I wille wel saide kyng Meliodas that ye be ruled as your courage wille rule you.

Thenne sir Trystram thanked his fader moche. And thenne he made hym redy to ryde in to Cornewaile. In the meane whyle there came a messager with letters of loue fro kynge Faramon of Fraunces doughter vnto syre Trystram that were ful pyteous letters, & in them were wryten many complayntes of loue, but syre Tristram had no joye of her letters nor regard vnto her. Also she sente hym a lytel brachet that was passynge fayre. But whan the kynges doughter vnderstood that syre Trystram wold not loue her, as the booke sayth, she dyed for sorou. And thenne the same squyer that broughte the letter and the brachet came ageyne vnto syr Trystram, as after ye shalle here in the tale. Soo this yonge syre Trystram rode vnto his eme kynge Marke of Cornewayle. And whanne he came there, he herd say that ther wold no knyghte fyghte with syre Marhaus. Thenne yede sir Tristram vnto his eme and sayd, syre yf ye wylle gyue me thordre of knyghthode, I wille doo bataille with syr Marhaus. What are ye said the kynge and from whens be ye comen. Sir said Trystram I come fro kynge Melyodas that wedded your syster and a gentylman wete ye wel I am.

Kynge Marke behelde sir Trystram and sawe that he was but a yonge man of age, but he was passyngly wel maade and bygge. Faire syre said the kynge what is youre name and where were ye borne. Syre sayd he ageyne, my name is Trystram, and in the countreye of Lyones was I borne. Ye saye wel said the kynge, and yf ye wille doo this batayll I shalle make yow knyghte. Therfore I come to you sayd syre Trystram and for none other cause.

But thenne kynge Marke made hym knyghte. And there with al anone as he had made hym knyght he sente a messager vnto syre Marhaus with letters that said, that he hadde fonde a yonge knyghte redy for to take the bataile to the vttermest, hit may wel be said syre

Marhaus. But telle kynge Marke I wille not fyghte with no knyghte but he be of blood royal, that is to saye, outher kynges sone outher quenes sone borne of a prynce or pryncesse.

Whanne Kynge Marke vnderstood that, he sente for syre Trystram de lyones and tolde hym what was the ansuer of syr Marhaus. Thenne sayd syre Trystram sythen that he seyth soo, lete hym wete that I am comen of fader syde and moder syde of as noble blood as he is. For syre now shalle ye knowe that I am kynge Melyodas sone borne of youre own syster dame Elyzabeth that dyed in the forest in the byrthe of me. O Jhesu said kynge Mark ye are welcome faire neuewe to me. Thenne in alle the haste the kynge lete horse syr Tristram and arme hym in the best maner that myghte be had or goten for gold or syluer. And thenne kynge Marke sente vnto sir Marhaus, and dyd hym to wete that a better born mā than he was hym self shold fyghte with hym, and his name is sir Trystram de lyonas, goten of kynge Melyodas, and borne of kynge Markes syster. Thenne was sir Marhaus glad and blythe that he shold fyghte with suche a gentylman, and soo by the assente of kynge Mark and of syr Marhaus they lete ordeyne that they shold fyghte within an Iland nyghe syr Marhaus shyppes, and soo was syr Trystram putte in to a vessel bothe his hors and he and all that to hym longed bothe for his body and for his hors. Syre Trystram lacked no thynge. And whan kynge Marke and his Barons of Cornewaile beheld how yonge syr Trystram departed with suche a caryage to fyghte for the ryghte of Cornewaile, there was neyther man ne woman of worship but they wepte to see and vnderstande soo yonge a knyght to jeoparde hym self for their ryghte.

Capitulum sextum.

Soo to shorten this tale, whan syr Trystram was arryued within the Iland, he loked to the ferther syde, & there he sawe at an anker syxe shippes nyghe to the land, and vnder the shadowe of the shippes vpon the land, there houed the noble knyghte syr Marhaus of Irland. Thenne syr Trystram commaunded his seruaunt gouernail to brynge

his hors to the land and dresse his harneis at al manere of ryghtes. And thenne whan he had soo done, he mounted vpon his hors. And whan he was in his sadel wel apparailled, & his shelde dressid vpon his sholder, Trystram asked Gouernayle where is this knyghte that I shal haue adoo with alle. Syre sayd Gouernaile, see ye hym not, I wende ye had sene hym, yonder he houeth vnder the vmbre of his shippes on horsbak with his spere in his hand and his sheld vpon his sholder. That is trouthe sayd the noble knyght syre Trystram, now I see hym wel ynouz. Thenne he commaunded his seruaunt Gouernayle to goo to his vessaile ageyne, and commaunde me vntō myne eme kynge Marke, and praye hym, yf that I be slayn in this battaille for to entere my body as hym semed best, & as for me lete hym wete that I will neuer yelde me for cowardyse, and yf I be slayne and flee not, thenne they haue lost no truage for me. And yf soo be that I flee or yelde me as recreaūt, bydde myn eme neuer berye me in Crysten beryels. And upon thy lyf said syr Trystram to Gouernayle, come thou not nyghe this Ilande tyl that thou see me ouercomen or slayne, or els that I wynne yonder knyght, soo eyther departed from other sore wepynge.

Capitulum septimum.

And thenne syr Marhaus auysed syr Trystram and said thus, yonge knyght syr Trystram what dost thou here, me sore repenteth of thy courage, for wete thou wel I haue ben assayed, and the best knyghtes of this land haue ben assayed of my hand. And also I haue matched with the best knyghtes of the world, and therfor by my counceille retorne ageyne vnto thy vessaile. And faire knyght and wel preued knyght said syre Trystram thou shalt wel wete I maye not forsake the in this quarel, for I am for thy sake made knyght. And thou shalt wel wete that I am a kynges sone born and goten vpon a quene, and suche promyse I haue made att my neuews request and myn owne sekyng that I shalle fyghte with the vnto the vttermest, and delyuer Cornewaile from the old truage. And also wete thou wel syr Marhaus, that this is the grettest cause that thou

couragest me to haue adoo with the. For thou art called one of the moost renoumed knyghtes of the world, and by cause of that noyse and fame, that thou hast, thou gyuest me courage to haue adoo with the, for neuer yet was I preued with good knyghte. And sythen I toke the ordre of knyghthode this day, I am wel pleasyd that I maye haue adoo with so good a knyght as thou arte. And now wete thou wel syr Marhaus that I caste me to gete worship on thy body. And yf that I be not preued, I trust to god that I shal be worshipfully preued vpon thy body, and to delyuer the countrey of Cornewaile for euer fro al maner of truage from Irland for euer. Whanne syr Marhaus had herde hym saye what he wold, he saide thenne thus ageyn, Fair Knyght sythen it is soo that thou castest to wynne worship of me, I lete the wete, worship may thou none lese by me yf thou mayst stande me thre strokes, for I lete the wete, for my noble dedes preued and sene, Kyng Arthur made me knyghte of the table round. Thenne they beganne to feutre theyre speres, and they mette soo fyersly to gyders that they smote eyther other doune, both hors and all. But sir Marhaus smote syr Trystram a grete wounde in the syde with his spere, & thenne they auoyded their horses, and pulled oute their swerdes, and threwe their sheldes afore them. And thenne they lasshed to gyders as men that were wyld and couragyous. And whan they hadde stryken soo to gyder longe, thenne they lefte her strokes, and foyned at their brethes and vysours, & when they sawe that that myght not preuaile them, thēne they hurtled to gyders lyke rammes to bere eyther other doun. thus they fought stylle more than half a day, and eyder were wounded passyng sore, that the blood ranne doune fresshly fro them vpon the ground. By thenne syr Trystram waxed more fressher, than syr Marhaus and better wynded and bygger, and with a myghty stroke he smote syr Marhaus vpon the helme suche a buffet that hit went thorou his helme, and thorou the coyfe of stele and thorou the brayn pan, and the swerd stak soo fast in the helme and in his brayn pan that sir Trystram pulled thryes at his swerd or euer he myght pulle it out from his hede, & there Marhaus felle doun on his knees the edge of Tristrams swerd left in his brayne pan. And sodenly syr Marhaus rose grouelynge and threwe his swerd and his shelde from hym, and soo

ranne to his shippes and fledde his waye, and sir tristram hadde euer his shelde and his swerd. And whan sir Tristram sawe sir Marhaus withdrawe hym, he said A sir knyght of the roūd table why withdrawest thou the, thou dost thy selfe and thy kyn grete shame, for I am but a yong Knyghte, or now I was neuer preued, and rather than I shold withdrawe me from the, I had rather be hewen in C pyeces. Syr marhaus ansuerd no worde but yee his way sore gronynge. Well sir knyght said sir Tristram I promyse the thy suerd and thy sheld shal be myn, and thy sheld shalle I were in al places where I ryde on myn aduentures and in the syghte of kyng Arthur and alle the round table.

Capitulum viii.

Anon sir Marhaus and his felaushiip departed in to Irland. And as soone as he came to the kynge his broder, he lete serche his woundes. And whan his hede was serched, a pyece of syre Trystrams swerd was founden therin, and myghte neuer be had oute of his hede for no surgeons, and soo he dyed of syr Trystrams swerd, and that pyece of the swerd the quene his syster kepte hit for euer wyth her, for she thoughte to be reuengyd and she myghte.

Now torne we ageyne vnto syr Trystram, that was sore wounded, and ful sore bled that he myzt not within a lytel whyle when he had taken cold vnnethe stere hym of his lymmes. And thēne he sette hym doune softely vpon a lytel hylle, and bledde fast. Thenne anone came Gouernaile his man with his vessel. And the kynge and his barons came with procession ageynst hym. And whan he was come vnto the land, Kynge Marke toke hym in his armes, and the kynge and sir Dynas the senescal ladde syr Tristram in to the castel of Tyntygail. And thenne was he serched in the best maner, and leid in his bedde. And whan kynge Marke sawe his woundes, he wepte hertely and soo dyd alle his lordes. So god me help said kyng Mark I wolde not for alle my landes that my neuewe dyed. Soo syr Trystram laye there a moneth and more, and euer he was lyke to deye of that stroke that sir Marhaus smote hym fyrst with the

spere. For as the Frensshe book saith, the speres hede was enuenymed that syr Trystram myghte not be hole. Thenne was kynge Mark and alle his barons passynge heuy. For they demed none other, but that syr Trystram sholde not recouer. Thenne the kynge lete sende after alle manere of leches & surgens bothe vnto men and wymmen, and there was none, that wold behote hym the lyf. Thenne came there a lady that was a ryght wyse lady, & she said playnly vnto kyng mark and to sir Trystram and to alle his barons that he shold neuer be hole, but yf sire Trystram wente in the same countrey that the venym came fro, and in that countrey shold he be holpen or els neuer. Thus said the lady vnto the Kynge. Whan kynge Marke vnderstood that, he lete purueye for syr Trystram a faire vessel, wel vytailled, and therin was put syr Trystram and gouernail with hym, and sir Tristram toke his harp with hym, and soo he was putte in to the see to sayle in to Irland, and soo by good fortune he arryued vp in Irland euen fast by a castel where the Kynge and the quene was, and at his arryuayl he sat and harped in his bedde a mery lay suche one herd they neuer none in Irland afore that tyme.

And whan it was told the Kyng and the quene of suche a Knyght that was suche an harper, anone the Kyng sente for hym, and lete serche his woundes, and thenne asked hym his name, thenne he ansuerd I am of the countrey of Lyonas, & my name is Tramtryst that thus was wounded in a bataille as I fought for a ladyes ryght. So god me help said kyng Anguysshe ye shal haue all the helpe in this land that ye may haue here. But I lete you wete in Cornewaile I had a grete losse, as euer hadde kynge, for there I lost the best knyghte of the world, his name was Marhaus a ful noble knyghte and Knyght of the table round, and there he told syr Trystrā wherefore syr Marhaus was slayne. Syr Trystram made semblaunt as he had ben sory, and better knewe he how hit was than the kynge.

Capitulum ix.

THENNE the kynge for grete fauoure maade Tramtryst to be put in his doughters ward and kepyng by cause she was a noble surgeon. And whan she had serched hym, she fond in the bottome of his wound that therin was poyson, and soo she heled hym within a whyle, and therfore Tramtrist cast grete loue to la beale Isoud, for she was at that tyme the fairest mayde and lady of the worlde. And there Tramtryst lerned her to harpe, and she beganne to haue a grete fantasye vnto hym. And at that tyme sir Palamydes the sarasyn was in that countrey and wel cherysshed with the kynge and the quene. And euery day syr Palamydes drewe vnto la beale Isoud, and profered her many yeftes, for he loued her passyngly wel. Al that aspyed Tramtryst, and ful wel knewe he syr Palamydes for a noble knyght and a myghty man. And wete ye wel syr Tramtryst had grete despyte at syr palomydes, for la beale Isoud told Tramtryst that Palamydes was in wylle to be crystened for her sake. Thus was ther grete enuy betwixe Tramtryst and syr Palamydes. Thenne hit befelle that kynge Anguysshe lete crye a grete justes and a grete turnement for a lady that was called the lady of the launde, and she was nyghe cosyn vnto the kynge. And what man wanne her, thre dayes after he shold wedde her and haue alle her landes. This crye was made in England, Walys, Scotland, and also in Fraunce and in Bretayne. It befelle vpon a day la beale Isoud came vnto syr Tramtryst and told hym of this turnement, he ansuerd and sayd fayr lady I am but a feble knyghte, and but late I had ben dede, had not your good ladyship ben. Now fayre lady what wold ye I shold doo in this matere. Wel ye wote my lady that I maye not juste. A Tramtryst said la beale Isoud why wille ye not haue ado at that turnement, wel I wote syr Palamydes shall be there, and to doo what he maye. And therfore Tramtryst I pray you for to be there, for els syr Palamydes is lyke to wynne the degree. Madame said Tramtrist as for that, it may be soo, for he is a proued knyght, and I am but a yong knyght and late made, and the fyrst batail that I dyd it myshapped me to be sore wounded as ye see. But and I

wyst ye wold be my better lady, at that turnement I will be so that ye wille kepe my counceille and lete no creature haue knouleche that I shalle Juste but your self, and suche as ye wil to kepe your counceil, my poure persone shall I jeoparde there for your sake, that perauentur sir Palamydes shal knowe whan that I come. Therto said la beale Isoud do your best & as I can said la beale Isoud I shal purueye hors and armour for you at my deuyse. as ye will soo be hit said syr Trātrist, I wille be at your cōmaundement. So at the day of Justes, ther cam sir Palamydes with a black sheld, & he ouerthrew many knyghtes that alle the peple had merueylle of hym. For he putte to the werse syr Gawayne, Gaherys, Agrauayn, Bagdemagus, kay, Dodyus le saueage, Sagramor le desyrus, Gumret le petyte, and Gryflet le fyse de dieu. Alle these the fyrste daye syr Palamydes strake doune to the erthe. And thenne alle maner of knyghtes were adred of sir Palamydes and many called hym the knyght with the black shelde. Soo that day syre Palamydes had grete worshyp. Thenne cam kynge Anguysshe vnto Tramtryst, and asked hym why he wold not juste. Syr he said I was but late hurte, and as yet I dare not auenture me. Thenne came there the same squyer that was sente from the kynges doughter of Fraunce, vnto syr Trystram. And whanne he had aspyed syre Trystrā he felle flat to his feete. Alle that aspyed la Beale Isoud, what cortosye the squyer made vnto syr Trystram. And therwith al sodenly syr Trystram ranne vnto his squyer whos name was Hebes le renoumes, and praid hym hertely in noo wyse to telle his name. Syr said Hebes I wille not discouer your name, but yf ye commaunde me.

Capitulum x.

THENNE syr Trystram asked hym what he dyd in those countreyes, syr he sayd, I came hyder with syr Gawayn for to be made knyght. And yf it please you of your handes that I may be made knyghte. Awaite vpon me as to morn secretely, and in the feld I shal make you a knyght. Thenne had la beale Isoud grete suspecyon vnto Tramtryst that he was somme man of worship proued, and

ther with she comforted her self, and cast more loue vnto hym than she had done tofore. And soo on the morne syr Palamydes maade hym redy to come in to the feld as he dyd the fyrst day. And there he smote doune the kynge with the C knyghtes and the kynge of Scottes. Thenne had la beale Isoud ordeyned and wel arayed syr Trystram in whyte hors and harneis. And ryght soo she lete putte hym oute at a preuy posterne, & soo he came in to the feld as it had ben a bryght angel. And anone syr Palamydes aspyed hym, and ther with he feutrid a spere vnto syr Tramtrist, and he ageyne vnto hym. And there syr Trystram smote doune syr Palamydes vnto the erth. And thenne there was a grete noyse of peple, some sayd, syre Palamydes hadde a falle, some said the knyght with the blak shelde had a falle. And wete you wel la beale Isoud was passynge gladde. And thenne sire Gawayne and his felawes ix had merueille what knyghte it myght be that had smyten doune syr Palamydes. Thenne wold there none juste with Tramtryst, but alle that there were forsoke hym, moost & lest. Thenne syr Trystram made Hebes a knyght, and caused hym to put hym self forthe, and dyd ryght wel that day. So after syr Hebes held hym wyth syr Trystram. And whan syre Palamydes had receyued this falle, wete ye wel that he was sore ashamed. And as pryuely as he myght, he withdrewe hym oute of the feld. Alle that aspyed syre Trystram, and lyghtly he rode after syre Palamydes and ouertoke hym, and badde hym torne, for better he wold assaye hym, or euer he departed. Thenne syr Palamydes torned hym and eyther lasshed at other with their swerdes. But at the fyrste stroke syr Trystram smote doune Palamydes, and gaf hym suche a stroke vpon the hede that he felle to the erthe. Soo thenne Tristram badde yelde hym, and doo his commaundement or els he wold slee hym. Whan syre Palamydes beheld his countenaunce, he dredde his buffets soo, that he graunted al his askynges. Wel said, said sir Tristram, this shalle be your charge. Fyrst vpon payne of your lyf that ye forsake my lady la beale Isoud, and in no maner wyse that ye drawe not to her. Also this twelue moneth and a day, that ye bere none armour nor none harneis of werre. Now promyse me this or here shalt thou dye. Allas saide Palamydes for euer am I ashamed. Thenne he sware as syr Trystram hadde com-

maunded hym. Thenne for despyte and anger, syre Palamydes cutte of his harneis, and threwe them aweye. And soo syr Trystram torned ageyne to the Castel where was la beale Isoud, and by the weye he mette with a damoysel that asked after syre launcelot that wanne the dolorous gard worshipfully, & this damoysel asked sire Tristram what he was. For it was tolde her that it was he that smote doune syr Palamydes, by whom the x knyghtes of kynge Arthurs were smyten doune. Thenne the damoysel prayd syr Trystram to telle her what he was. And whether that he were syr Launcelot du lake, for she demyd that there was no knyght in the world myghte do suche dedes of armes, but yf it were Launcelot. Fayre damoysel sayd syr Trystram wete ye wel that I am not syr launcelot for I was neuer of suche prowesse, but in god is al that he maye make me as good a knyght as the good knyght sir laūcelot. Now gentyl knyght said she, put vp thy vysure, & whan she beheld his vysage, she thouzt she sawe neuer a better mās vysage, nor a better farynge knyght. And thenne whan the damoysel knewe certaynly that he was not syre launcelot, thenne she took her leue and departed from hym. And thenne syre Trystram rode pryuely vnto the posterne where kepte hym la beale Isoud, and there she made hym good chere and thanked god of his good spede. Soo anone within a whyle the kynge and the quene vnderstood that hit was Tramtryst that smote doune syre Palamydes, thenne was he moche made of more than he was before.

Capitulum xi.

Thus was sir Tramtryst longe there wel cherysshed, with the kynge and the quene, and namely with la beale Isoud. So vpon a daye, the quene and la beale Isoud made a bayne for syre Tramtryst. And whan he was in his bayne, the quene and Isoud her doughter romed vp & doune in the chamber, and there whyles Gouernail and Hebes attendyd vpon Tramtryst, & the quene beheld his swerd there as it laye vpon his bedde. And thēne by vnhap the quene drewe out his swerd, and beheld it a longe whyle, and bothe they thoughte

it a passynge fayre swerd, but within a foote and an half of the poynte there was a grete pyece there of oute broken of the edge. And whan the quene aspyed that gap in the swerd, she remembryd her of a pyece of a swerd, that was foũde in the brayne pan of syre Marhaus the good knyght that was her broder. Allas thenne said she vnto her doughter la beale Isoud, this is the same traytour knyghte that slewe my broder thyn eme. Whanne Isoud herd her saye soo, she was passynge sore abasshed, for passyng wel she loued Tramtryst, and ful wel she knewe the cruelnes of her moder the quene. Anon there with alle the quene went vnto her owne chamber, and soughte her cofre, and there she toke oute the pyece of the swerd that was pulled out of syr Marhaus hede after that he was dede. And thenne she ranne with that pyece of yron to the swerd that laye vpon the bedde. And whanne she putte that pyece of stele and yron vnto the swerd, hit was as mete as it myghte be, whan it was newe broken. And thẽne the quene gryped that swerd in her hand fyersly, & with alle her myghte she ranne streyghte vpon Tramtryst where he sat in his bayne. And there she hadde ryued hym thorou hadde not syr Hebes goten her in his armes, and pulled the suerd from her, and els she hadde threst hym thorou. Thenne whanne she was lettyd of her euyl wylle, she ranne to the kynge Anguyssh her husband and sayde on her knees, O my lord here haue ye in your hous that traitour knyght that slewe my broder and your seruaunt that noble knyght syr Marhaus. Who is that said kynge Anguysshe and where is he. Syr she said hit is syr Tramtryst the same knyght that my doughter helyd. Allas said the kynge therfore am I ryght heuy, for he is a ful noble knyght as euer I sawe in felde. But I charge you said the kyng to the quene that ye haue not ado with that knyght, but lete me dele with hym. Thenne the kynge went in to the chambre vnto syr Tramtryst, and thenne was he gone vnto his chambre, and the kynge fond hym al redy armed to mounte vpon his hors. Whanne the kynge sawe hym al redy armed to goo vnto horsbak, the kynge said, nay Tramtryst hit wille not auaile to compare the ageynst me. But thus moche I shalle doo for my worship and for thy loue in soo moch as thou arte within my courte, hit were no worship for me to slee the. Therfore vpon this condycyon I wille

gyue the leue for to departe from this courte in saufte, so thou wilt telle me who was thy fader, and what is thy name, and yf thou slewe syr Marhaus my broder.

Capitulum xii.

Syr said Trystram now I shalle telle you alle the trouthe, my faders name is sir Melyodas kynge of Lyonas, & my moder hyzt Elyzabeth that was sister vnto kynge Marke of Cornewaile, & my moder dyed of me in the foreste. And by cause therof she commaunded or she dyed that whan I were crystened, they shold crystene me Trystram, & by cause I wold not be knowen in this countrey I turned my name and lete me calle Tramtryst, & for the truage of Cornewayle I fought for myn emes sake, & for the ryght of Cornewaile that ye had posseded many yeres. And wete ye well sayd Trystram vnto the kynge I dyd the battaille for the loue of myn vnkel kynge Marke, and for the loue of the countreye of Cornewaile, and for to encreace myn honoure. For that same day that I fought with sir Marhaus I was made knyzt. And neuer or than dyd I no bataile with no knyght, & fro me he went alyue, & lefte his sheld & his suerd behynde, so god me helpe said the kyng I may not say but ye dyd as a knyght shold, & it was your part to doo for your quarel, & to encreace your worship as a knyght shold, how be it I may not mayntene you in this countrey with my worship onles that I shold displease my barons & my wyf, & her kyn. Syr said Trystram I thanke you of your good lordship that I haue had with you here, and the grete goodenes my lady your doughter hath shewed me, & therefor said sir Tristram it may so happen that ye shalle wynne more by my lyf than by my dethe, for in the partyes of Englond it may happen I may doo you seruyse at some season that ye shal be glad that euer ye shewed me your good lordship. With more I promyse you as I am true knyzt that in all places I shal be my lady your douzters seruaunt, & knyzt in ryght & in wrong, & I shal neuer fayle her to doo as moche as a knyght maye doo.

Also I byseche your good grace that I may take my leue at my

lady your doughter and at alle the Barons and knyghtes. I wille wel said the kynge. Thenne sire Tristram wente vnto la beale Isoud, and tooke his leue of her. And thenne he tolde her all what he was and how he had chaunged his name by cause he wold not be knowen, & hou a lady told hym y^t^ he shold neuer be hole tyl he cam in to this coũtrey where the poyson was made, where thorou I was nere my dethe had not your ladyship ben. O gentyl knyght said la beale Isoud, ful wo am I of thy departynge, for I sawe neuer man that I oughte soo good will to, and there with alle she wepte hertely. Madame said sire Trystram ye shalle vnderstande that my name is sir Trystram de lyones, goten of kyng Melyodas and borne of his quene. And I promyse you feythfully that I shal be alle the dayes of my lyf your knyghte. Gramercy said La beale Isoud, and I promyse you there ageynste that I shalle not be maryed this seuen yeres but by your assent, and to whome that ye wille I shalle be maryed to, hym wylle I haue, and he wille haue me yf ye wil consente. And thenne syre Trystram gaf her a rynge and she gaf hym another, and ther with he departed fro her, leuynge her, makynge grete dole and lamentacion, and he streyghte wente vnto the Courte amonge alle the Barons, and there he took his leue at moost and leest, and openly he said amonge them all, Faire lordes now it is soo that I muste departe. Yf there be ony man here that I haue offended vnto, or that ony man be with me greued, lete complayne hym here afore me or that euer I depart and I shal amende it vnto my power. And yf there be ony that wil profer me wronge or say of me wrong, or shame behynde my bak, saye hit now or neuer, and here is my body to make it good body ageynst body. And alle they stood stylle, ther was not one that wold saye one word, yet were there some knyghtes that were of the quenes blood and of sire Marhaus blood, but they wold not medle with hym.

Capitulum xiii.

Soo sir Tristram departed and toke the see, & with good wynde he arryued vp at Tyntagyl in Cornewaile, & whan kyng Mark was

hole in his prosperite ther cam tydynges that sir Tristram was arryued and hole of his woundes, therof was kynge marke passyng glad, & soo were alle the barons, & whan he sawe his tyme he rode vnto his fader kyng melyodas, & there he had al the chere that the kyng & the quene coude make hym. And thenne largely Kyng Melyodas and his quene departed of their landes and goodes to sire Trystram. Thenne by the lycence of Kyng Melyodas his fader he retorned ageyne vnto the court of kynge Mark, and there he lyued in grete ioye long tyme, vntyl at the laste there befelle a jalousye and an vnkyndenes betwyxe kynge Marke and sir. Tristram, for they loued bothe one lady. And she was an erles wyf that hyght syre Segwarydes. And this lady loued syre Trystram passyngly wel. And he loued her ageyne for she was a passynge fayr lady, And that aspyed sir Tristram wel. Thenne kynge Mark vnderstood that and was jalous, for kyng Marke loued her passyngly wel. Soo it felle vpon a day, this lady sent a dwerf vnto sir Tristram and badde hym as he loued her, that he wold be with her the nyzt nexte folowynge. Also she charged you that ye come not to her but if ye be wel armed, for her louer was called a good knyghte. Syre Trystram answerd to the dwerf, recommaunde me vnto my lady, and telle her I wille not fayle but I wille be with her the terme that she hath sette me, and with this ansuer the dwerf departed. And kynge Marke aspyed that the dwerfe was with syre Trystram vpon message from Segwarydes wyf, thenne kyng Marke sent for the dwerfe. And whanne he was comen, he maade the dwerf by force to telle hym alle why and wherfore that he came on message from sire Tristram.

Now said kynge Marke goo where thou wolt, and vpon payne of dethe that thou saye no word that thou spakest with me, soo the dwerf departed from the kynge. And that same nyghte that the steuen was sette betwixt Segwarydes wyfe & syr Trystram kynge Marke armed hym, and made hym redy and took two knyghtes of his counceylle with hym, and soo he rode afore for to abyde by the waye, for to awayte vpon sir Trystram. And as sire Trystram came rydynge vpon hys waye with his spere in his hand, kynge Marke came hurtlynge vpon hym with his two knyghtes sodenly. And alle thre smote hym with theyre speres, and kynge Marke hurte syre

Trystram on the brest ryght sore. And thenne syre Tristram feutryd his spere, and smote his vnkel kynge Marke soo sore that he rasshyd hym to the erthe, and brysed hym that he laye stylle in a swoune, and longe hit was or euer he myghte welde hym self. And thenne he ranne to the one knyght, and ofte to the other, and smote hem to the cold erthe, that they laye stylle. And ther with alle sir Tristram rode forthe sore wounded to the lady, and fonde her abydynge hym at a posterne.

Capitulum xiiii.

And there she welcomed hym fayre, and eyther halsed other in armes, and soo she lete putte vp his hors in the best wyse, and thenne she vnarmed hym. And soo they souped lyghtely and wente to bedde with grete ioye and plesaunce, and soo in his ragyng he took no kepe of his grene wound that kynge Marke had gyuen hym. And soo syr Tristram bebled both the ouer shete and the nether & pelowes, and hede shete, and within a whyle ther came one afore that warned her that her lord was nere hand within a bowe draughte. Soo she made sir Trystram to aryse, and soo he armed hym, and tooke his hors and so departed. By thenne was come segwarydes her lord, and whan he fond her bedde troubled & broken and wente nere and beheld it by candel lyghte, thenne he sawe that there had layne a wounded knyght. A fals traitresse thenne he said, why hast thou bitrayed me, and there with alle he swange oute a swerd and saide, but yf thou telle me who hath ben here, here thou shalt dye. A my lord mercy sayd the lady, and helde vp her handes, sayeng, slee me not, and I shall telle you alle who hath ben here. Telle anone said segwarydes to me alle the trouthe. Anone for drede she saide here was sir Trystram with me, and by the way as he came to me ward, he was sore wounded. A fals traitresse said segwarides where is he become. sir she said he is armed and departed on horsbak not yet hens half a myle. Ye saye wel said segwarydes, thenne he armed hym lyghtly, and gate his hors and rode after syre Tristram that rode streyght waye vnto Tyntagyl. And within a whyle he ouertoke sire

Tristram. And thenne he badde hym torne fals traitour knyghte, and syr Tristram anon torned hym ageynst hym. And there with al segwarides smote syr Trystram with a spere that it alle to braste. And thenne he swange oute his swerd, and smote fast at syr Tristram. Syre knyght said syre Trystram I counceyle you that ye smyte no more how be it for the wronges that I haue done you, I wille forbere you as longe as I maye. Nay sayd Segwarides that shalle not be, for outher thou shalt dye or I. Thenne syre Tristram drewe oute his swerd and hurtled his hors vnto hym fyersly, and thorou the waste of the body he smote syre Segwarides that he felle to the erthe in a swoune. And soo sire Tristram departed and lefte hym there. And soo he rode vnto Tyntagil and tooke his lodgynge secretely for he wold not be knowen that he was hurte.

Also sir Segwarides men rode after theyr maister, whome they fond lyenge in the feld sore wounded, and brouzt hym home on his shelde, and there he lay longe or that he were hole, but at the laste he recouerd. Also kynge Marke wold not be aknowen of that sir Tristram and he hadde mette that nyght. And as for syre Trystram he knewe not that kynge Marke had mette with hym. And soo the kynges astaũce came to sir Tristram to comforte hym as he laye seke in his bedde. But as longe as kynge Marke lyued, he loued neuer sire Trystram after that, though there was fayre speche, loue was there none. And thus it past many wekes and dayes, & alle was forgyuen and forgoten. For sire Segwarydes durste not haue ado with sir Tristram by cause of his noble prowesse. And also by cause he was neuewe vnto kynge Marke, therfore he lete it ouer slyp, for he that hath a pryuy hurte is loth to haue a shame outward.

Capitulum xv.

THENNE hit befelle vpon a daye that the good knyghte Bleoberys de ganys broder to Blamore de ganys, & nyghe cosyn vnto the good knyght sir launcelot du lake. This Bleoberys came vnto the courte of kynge Marke, & there he asked of kynge Marke a bone to gyue him what yeft that he wold aske in his courte.

Whanne the kyng herd hym aske soo, he merueilled of hys askynge, but by cause he was a knyghte of the round table, & of a grete renomme, kynge Marke graunted hym his hole askynge. thenne saide sire Bleoberys I wille haue the fayrest lady in your Courte that me lyst to chese. I maye not say nay sayd kynge marke. Now chese at youre aduenture. And soo sir Bleoberys dyd chese syr segwarydes wyf, and toke her by the hand and soo wente his waye with her, and soo he tooke his hors and gart sette her behynde his squyer and rode vpon his way. When sir segwarydes herd telle that his lady was gone with a knyght of kynge Arthurs courte, Thenne he armed hym and rode after that knyght for to rescowe his lady. soo whan Bleoberys was gone with this lady, kyng Mark and all the courte was wroth, that she was awey. thenne were there certayne ladyes that knewe that there was grete loue bitwene sir Tristram and her, and also that lady loued sir Tristram aboue alle other knyghtes. Thenne there was one lady that rebuked sir Tristram in the horryblest wyse, and called hym coward knyghte, that he wold for shame of his knyghthode see a lady soo shamefully be taken aweye fro his vnkels courte. But she ment that eyther of hem hadde loued other with entiere hert.

But sire Tristram ansuerd her thus. Faire lady it is not my parte to haue adoo in suche maters whyle her lord and husband is present here. And yf hit hadde ben that her lord hadde not ben here in this courte, thenne for the worship of this courte perauentur, I wold haue ben her champyon. And yf so be, sir segwarides spede not wel, it may happen that I wille speke with that good knyght, or euer he passe from this countrey. Thenne within a whyle came one of sir segwarydes squyers, and told in the court that sir segwarides was beten sore and wounded to the poynte of dethe, as he wold haue rescowed his lady, sir Bleoberis ouerthrewe hym and sore hath wounded hym. Thenne was kynge marke heuy therof, and alle the courte. When sire Tristram herd of this, he was ashamed and sore greued. And thenne was he soone armed and on horsbak, & gouernaile his seruaunt bare his shelde and spere. And soo as sire Tristram rode fast, he mette with sir Andret his cosyn that by the commaundement of kynge Marke was sente to brynge forth & euer it laye it his

power, ii. knyghtes of Arthurs Courte that rode by the countrey to seke their aduentures. Whan syr Trystram sawe sir Andret, he asked hym what tydynges. Soo god me helpe said syre Andret, ther was neuer worse with me, for here by the commaundement of kynge Mark I was sente to fetche two knyghtes of kynge Arthurs courte, and that one bete me, and wounded me, and sette nought by my message. Faire cosyn said sir tristram ryde on your way, and yf I may mete them, it may happen I shal reuenge you.

So syr Andret rode in to Cornewaile and syr Tristram rode after the two knyghtes, the whiche one hyght Sagramor le desyrus, & the other hyght Dodynas le saueage.

Capitulum xvi.

THENNE within a whyle syr Trystram sawe hem afore hym two lykely knyghtes. Sir said Gouernaile vnto his maister, sir I wold counceile you nought to haue ado with hem, for they ben two preued knyghtes of Arthurs Courte. As for that said syr Trystram haue ye no doute, but I wille haue adoo with hem to encreace my worship, for it is many daye sythen I dyd ony dedes of armes. doo as ye lyste said Gouernaile. And there with alle anone syr Trystram asked them, from whens they came, and wheder they wold, and what they dyd in tho marches. Syre Sagramore loked vpon syre Tristram, and hadde scorne of his wordes, & asked hym ageyne, Fair knyghte be ye a knyght of Cornewaile. Where by aske ye hit said sir Tristram. For it is seldom sene said sir Sagramore that ye Cornysshe knyghtes ben valyaunte men of armes. For within these two houres there mette vs one of you cornysshe knyghtes, and grete wordes he spak, and anon with lytel myght he was leyd to the erthe. And as I trowe sayd sir Sagramore ye shal haue the same handsel that he hadde. Faire lordes said sire Tristram it may soo happen that I maye better withstande than he dyd, and whether ye will or nyl, I wil haue ado with you, by cause he was my cosyn that ye bete. And therfore here do your best, & wete ye wel but yf ye quyte you the better here vpon this ground, one knyzt of cornewaile shal bete you both.

Whan sire Dodynas le saueage herd hym saye soo he gatte a spere in his hand and said, sire knyghte (kepe wel) thy self. And thenne they departed and came to gyders as it had ben thonder. And syr Dodynas spere brast in sonder, but syr Trystram smote hym with a more myght, that he smote hym clene ouer the hors croupe that nyghe he hadde broken his neck. Whanne syre Sagramour sawe his felawe haue suche a falle, he merueylled what knyzt he myght be. And he dresseth his spere with alle his myght, and syr Trystram ageynst hym, and they came to gyders as the thonder, and ther sir Tristram smote syr Sagramore a stronge buffet that he bare his hors & hym to the erthe, and in the fallyng he brake his thygh. Whan this was done, syr Trystram asked hem, Fayre knyghtes will ye ony more. Be there no bygger knyztes in the courte of kynge Arthur, it is to you shame to say of vs knyztes of Cornewayle dishonoure, for it may happen a Cornysshe knyght may matche you, that is trouthe said syr Sagramore, that haue we wel preued, but I requyre the sayd syre Sagramore telle vs youre ryght name by the feythe and trouthe that ye owe to the hyghe ordre of knyghthode. ye charge me with a grete thynge said syr Trystram, and sythen ye lyst to wete hit, ye shal knowe and vnderstande that my name is syr Trystram de lyonas kynge Melyodas sone, and neuewe vnto kynge Marke. Thenne were they two knyghtes fayne, that they had mette with Trystram, and soo they praid hym to abyde in their felauship. Nay said sire Tristram, for I must haue ado with one of your felawes, his name is syr Bleoberys de ganys. god spede you wel said syr Sagramore and Dodynas. Syre Trystram departed and rode on ward on his waye. And thenne was he ware before hym in a valeye where rode syr Bleoberys with sir Segwarydes lady that rode behynde his squyer vpon a palfroy.

Capitulum xvii.

THĒNE syr Trystram rode more than a paas vntyl that he had ouertake hym. Thenne spak syr Trystram abyde he said knyght of Arthurs courte, brynge ageyne that lady or delyuer her to me.

I wille doo neyther said Bleoberys, for I drede no Cornysshe knyght soo sore that me lyste to delyuer her. Why said syr Tristram may not a Cornysshe knyght doo as wel as another knyght. this same daye two knyghtes of your Courte within this thre myle mette with me, And or euer we departed, they fonde a Cornyssh knyght good ynough for them bothe. What were their names said Bleoberis. they told me said syr Tristram that the one of them hyghte syr Sagramore le desyrus, and the other hyghte Dodynas le saueage. A said syr Bleoberys haue ye met with them. Soo god me helpe they were two good knyghtes and men of grete worship. And yf ye haue bete them bothe, ye must nedes be a good knyght, but yf it soo be ye haue bete them bothe, yet shalle ye not fere me, but ye shalle bete me, or euer ye haue thys lady. Thenne defende you said syr Tristram, soo they departed and came to gyder lyke thonder, and eyder bare other doune hors and alle to the erthe. Thenne they auoyded their horses, and lasshed to gyder egerly with swerdes and myghtely, now tracyng and trauersynge on the ryght hand and on the lyfte hand more than two houres. And somtyme they rasshed to gyder with suche a myght that they laye bothe grouelynge on the ground. Thenne sir Bleoberis de ganys starte abak, and said thus. Now gentyl good knyght a whyle hold your handes, & lete vs speke to gyders. Saye what ye wille said Trystram, & I wille ansuere you. Sire saide Bleoberys I wold wete of whens ye be, and of whom ye be come, and what is your name. Soo god me help said syr Trystram I fere not to telle you my name. Wete ye wel I am kynge Melyodas sone, and my moder is kyng Markes sister, and my ame is sir Tristram de Lyonas and kynge Marke is myn vnkel. Truly said Bleoberys I am ryght gladde of you, for ye are he that slewe marhaus the knyght hand for hand in an Iland for the truage of Cornewaile. Also ye ouercame sir Palamydes the good knyght at a turnement in an Iland, where ye bete sir Gawayne & his nyne felawes. Soo god me helpe said sir Trystram wete ye wel that I am the same knyzt. Now I haue told you my name, telle me yours with good will. Wete ye wel that my name is sir Bleoberys de ganys, and my broder hyghte sire Blamore de ganys, that is called a good knyght and we be syster children vnto my lord sir Laũcelot du lake

that we calle one of the best knyghtes of the world. That is trouthe said sir Tristram, sir Launcelot is called pierles of curtosy and of knyghthode, and for his sake said sir Trystram I will not with my good wille fyghte no more with you for the grete loue I haue to sir Launcelot du lake. In good feith said Bleoberys, as for me, I wille be lothe to fyghte with you. But sythen ye folowe me here to haue this lady, I shal profer you kyndenys curtosy and gentilnes right here vpon this ground. This lady shalle be betwixe vs bothe, and to whome that she wille go, lete hym haue her in pees. I wille wel said Tristrā. For as I deme she wille leue you, and come to me. Ye shalle preue hit anone said Bleoberys.

Capitulum xviii.

Soo whan she was sette betwixe them bothe, she sayd these wordes vnto sir Tristram. Wete ye wel syr Tristram de lyones that, but late thou was the man in the world that I moost loued and trusted. And I wende thou haddest loued me ageyne aboue alle ladyes. But whan thou sawest this knyght lede me awey thou madest no chere to rescowe me, but suffred my lord Segwarydes ryde after me, but vntyl that tyme I wend thou haddest loued me. And therfore now I wille leue the, and neuer loue the more, & there with alle she went vnto sir Bleoberys. Whan syr Tristram sawe her doo soo, he was wonderly wrothe with that lady & ashamed to come to the courte. sir Tristram said sir Bleoberys ye are in the defaute, for I here by these ladyes wordes, she before this day trusted you aboue alle erthely knyghtes, and as she saith ye haue deceyued her, therfore wete ye wel, ther may noo man hold that wille aweye, and rather than ye shold be hertely displeasyd with me, I wold ye had her, and she wold abyde with you. Nay said the lady, so god me help I wil neuer goo with hym. For he that I loued most, I wende he had loued me. And therfore sire Trystram she said ryde as thou cam, for though thou haddest ouercome this knyzt as ye was lykely, with the neuer wold I haue gone. And I shall pray this knyghte soo faire of his knyghthode that or euer he passe this countrey, that he

wille lede me to the Abbeye, there my lord syr Segwarydes lyeth. Soo god me helpe said Bleoberis I lete yow wete good knyght sire Trystram by cause kynge Marke gaf me the choyse of a yefte in this courte, and so this lady lyked me best. Not withstandynge she is wedded and hath a lord, and I haue fulfylled my quest, she shall be sent vnto her husband ageyne. And in especyal moost for youre sake sir Trystram. And yf she wold goo with you, I wold ye had her. I thanke you said syr Trystram, but for her loue I shal beware what manere a lady I shalle loue or truste. For had her lord syr Segwarydes ben away from the courte I shold haue ben the fyrst that shold haue folowed yow, but sythen ye haue refused me, as I am true knyght I shalle her knowe passyngly wel that I shal loue or trust, and soo they took theyr leue one fro thother and departed. And soo sir tristram rode vnto Tyntagyl, and syr Bleoberys rode vnto the abbay where syr segwarydes lay sore wounded, and there he delyuerd his lady, and departed as a noble knyght, & whan sir segwarydes sawe his lady, he was gretely comforted, and thenne she told hym that sir Trystram had done grete bataill with syre Bleoberys, and caused hym to brynge her ageyne. These wordes pleasyd sir segwarydes ryght wel that sir tristram wold doo soo moche, and soo that lady told alle the bataill vnto kynge Marke betwixe syr Trystram and sir Bleoberys.

Capitulum xix.

THENNE whanne this was done, kynge Mark cast alweyes in his hert how he myght destroye syr Tristram. And thenne he ymagyned in hym self to sende sir tristram in to Irland for la beale Isoud. For sir Trystram had soo preysed her beaute and her goodnes that kynge Mark said he wold wedde her, where upon he praid syr Trystram to take his wey in to Irland for hym on message. And all this was done to the entente to slee syr Tristram. Not withstandynge syr Trystram wold not reffuse the message for no daũger nor peryl that myght falle for the pleasyr of his vnkel, but to goo he made hym redy in the most goodlyest wyse that myght be deuysed. For sir

Tristram tooke with hym the mooste goodlyest knyghtes that he myght fynde in the courte, & they were arayed after the gyse that was thenne vsed in the goodlyest maner. So sir Tristram departed and toke the see with alle his felaushyp. And anone as he was in the brode see, a tempest toke hym and his felaushyp and drofe them bak in to the coste of Englond. And there they arryued fast by Camelot, and ful fayne they were to take the land. And whan they were landed sir Tristram sette vp his pauelione vpon the land of Camelot, and there he lete hange his shelde vpon the pauelione. And that same day came two knyghtes of kynge Arthurs, that one was syr Ector de marys, and sir Morganor. And they touched the shelde, and badde hym come oute of the pauelione for to just and he wold just. ye shalle be ansuerd said sir Tristram and ye wille tarye a lytel whyle. Soo he made hym redy, and fyrste he smote doune sir Ector de marys, and after he smote doune sir Morganor alle with one spere, and sore brysed them. And whan they laye vpon the erthe, they asked sir Tristram what he was, and of what countrey he was knyghte. Faire lordes said sir Tristram, wete ye wel that I am of Cornewaile. Allas said sire Ector now am I ashamed, that euer ony Cornysshe knyghte shold ouercome me. And thenne for despyte syre Ector put of his armour fro hym, and wente on foot and wold not ryde.

Capitulum xx.

THENNE it felle that sire Bleoberys and sire Blamore de ganys that were bretheren they hadde assommoned the kyng Anguysshe of Irland for to come to Arthurs courte vpon payne of forfeture of kyng Arthurs good grace. And yf the kynge of Irland came not in at the day assigned and sette, the kynge shold lese his landes. So by hit happend that at the day assigned kyng Arthur neither sire Launcelot myght not be there for to gyue the jugement, for kynge Arthur was with sir launcelot at the castel ioyous gard. And so kinge Arthur assigned kyng Carados & the kynge of Scottes to be there that day as juges. Soo whenne the kynges were at Camelot, kyng Anguysshe of Irlonde

was come to knowe his accusers. Thenne was there syr Blamor de ganys and appeled the kynge of Irlond of treason, that he hadde slayne a cosyn of his in his court in Irlond by treason. The kyng was sore abasshed of his accusacyon, for why, he was come at the sōmons of kynge Arthur, and or he came at Camelot he wyst not wherfore he was sente after. And whan the kyng herde syr Blamor saye his wyll he vnderstode wel there was none other remedye but for to ansuer hym knyghtely, for the custommе was suche in tho dayes, that and ony man were appeled of ony treason or murther, he shold fyght body for body, or els to fynde an other knyght for hym. And alle maner of murtherers in tho dayes were called treason. And whanne kyng Anguysshe vnderstode his accusynge, he was passyng heuy, for he knew syr Blamor de ganys that he was a noble knyght and of noble knyghtes comen. Thenne the kynge of Irlond was symply purueyed of his ansuere, therfore the juges gaf hym respyte by the thyrde daye to gyue his ansuere. Soo the kyng departed vnto his lodgynge. The meane whyle there came a lady by sir Tristrams pauelyone makynge grete dole. What eyleth you sayd sir Tristram that ye make suche dole. A fayre knyght said the lady I am ashamed onles that somme good knyght helpe me, for a grete lady of worship sente by me a fayre childe and a ryche vnto syr Laūcelot du lake, and here by there mette with me a knyght & threwe me doun fro my palfroy and toke awaye the childe from me. Well my lady said syr Tristram and for my lorde syr Launcelots sake I shalle gete you that childe ageyne, or els I shal be beten for hit. And soo sire Tristram toke his hors and asked the lady whiche wey the knyght rode. And thenne she tolde hym. And he rode after hym, and within a whyle he ouertoke y^{t} knyght. And thenne syr Tristram badde hym torne and gyue ageyne the child.

Capitulum xxi.

The knyght torned his hors and made hym redy for to fyghte. And thenne sir Tristram smote him with a swerde suche a buffet, that he tombled to the erthe. And thenne he yelded hym vnto sir

Tristram. Come then thy way said syr Tristram and brynge the childe to the lady ageyne. Soo he toke his hors mekely and rode with syr Tristram, and thenne by the waye sir Tristram asked him his name, and he said my name is Breus saunce pyte. Soo whanne he had delyuerd that childe to the lady he said, sir as in this the childe is well remedyed. And thenne sir Trystram lete hym goo ageyne that sore repented hym after, for he was a grete foo vnto many good knyghtes of kynge Arthurs courte. Thenne whan syr Tristram was in his pauelyone, Gouernaile his man came and told him how that kyng Anguysshe of Irlond was come thyder and he was put in grete dystresse, and there Gouernaile told sir Tristram how kynge Anguysshe was somoned and appeled of murther. Soo god me helpe said sir Tristram these ben the best tydynges that euer cam to me this seuen yeres, for now shalle the kynge of Irlond haue nede of my helpe, for I dar saye there is no knyght in this coũtre that is not of Arthurs courte dare doo batail with syr Blamor de ganys, and for to wynne the loue of the kyng of Irlond I wil take the batayll vpon me, and therfore Gouernaile brynge me I charge the to the kyng. Soo Gouernaile wente vnto kynge Anguysshe of Irlond and salewed him fayre. The kynge welcomed hym and asked hym what he wold. Syr saide Gouernaile here is a knyghte nere honde that desyreth to speke with you, he badde me say he wold do you seruyce. What Knyght is he sayd the kyng. Syr sayd he hit is syr Tristram du lyonas that for your good grace that ye shewed to hym in your landes wyll rewarde you in this coũtrey. Come on felawe said the kyng with me anone and shewe me vnto sir Trystram. Soo the kyng toke a lytell hackeney and but fewe felauship with him vntyl he came vnto syr Trystrams pauelione. and whanne syre Trystram sawe the kyng, he ranne vnto hym and wold haue holden his styrope. But the kynge lepte from his hors lyghtly, & eyther halsed other in their armes. My gracious Lord sayde syr Trystram, gramercy of your grete goodnesses shewed vnto me in your marches and londes. And at that tyme I promysed you to doo you seruyce and euer hit laye in my power. And gentyll knyght sayd the kyng vnto sir Tristram, now haue I grete nede of you, neuer hadde I soo grete nede of no knyghtes helpe. How so my good lorde said sir Trystram. I shalle

telle you sayd the kynge. I am assomoned and appeled fro my coũtree for the deth of a knyzt that was kynne vnto the good knyght syr Launcelot, wherfore syr Blamor de ganys broder to syr Bleoberys hath appeled me to fyght with hym, or eyther to fynde a knyght in my stede. And I wote well sayd the kyng these that are come of kynge Bans blood, as syr Launcelot and these other are passynge good knyghtes and harde men for to wynne in batayll as ony that I knowe now lyuynge. Sir said syr Tristram, for the good lordship that ye shewed vnto me in Irlond and for my lady your doughters sake la beale Isoud I wille take the bataille for you vpon this condycyon, that ye shall graunte me two thynges, that one is that ye shall swere to me that ye are in the ryght, that ye were neuer consentynge to the knyghtes deth. Syr thene said sir Trystram, whanne that I haue done this bataille yf god gyue me grace that I spede that ye shalle gyue me a rewarde what thynge resonable that I wil aske of you. Soo god me helpe sayd the kyng ye shal haue what someuer ye wyll aske. It is well said sayd sir Tristram.

Capitulum xxii.

Now make your ansuere that your champyon is redy. For I shall deye in your quarell rather than to be recreaunt. I haue no doubte of you sayd the kyng, that and ye shold haue adoo with syr Launcelot du lake. Syre said syr Tristram, as for syr Laũcelot he is called the noblest knyzt of the worlde. And wete ye well that the knyghtes of his blood are noble men and drede shame, and as for Bleoberys broder vnto syr Blamor I haue done batayll with hym, therfore vpon my heed hit is noo shame to calle hym a good knyght. It is noysed sayd the kyng that syr Blamor is the hardyer knyght. Syr as for that lete hym be, he shall neuer be refused, and as he were the best knyght that now bereth shelde or spere. Soo kyng Anguysshe departed vnto kyng Carados and the kynges that were that tyme as juges and tolde hem that he hadde fonde his champyon redy. And thenne by the commaundement of the kynges syr Blamor de

ganys and sir Trystram de lyones were sente for to here theyr charge. And whanne they were comen to fore the juges, there were many kynges and knyghtes that behelde syr Trystram, and moche speche hadde they of hym by cause that he slewe syr Marhaus the good knyght, and also by cause he foriusted syr Palomydes that noble knyght. Soo whanne they had taken theyr charge, thenne they withdrewe them for to make hem redy to doo batayll. Thenne said syr Bleoberys vnto his broder syr Blamor, fayr dere broder now remembre of what kynne that we are comen of, and what a man that syr Launcelot du lake is, neyther ferther nor nerer but broders childern, and there was neuer none of our kynne that euer was ashamed in batayll, and rather suffre deth broder than to be shamed. Broder sayd Blamor haue ye noo doubte of me, for I shall neuer shame none of my blood, how be it I am sure that yonder knyzt is called a passynge good knyght as of his tyme one of the best of the worlde, yet shall I neuer yelde me nor saye the lothe worde, well may he happen to smyte me doun with his grete myght of chyualrye, but rather shall he slee me than I shal yelde me as recreaũt. God spede you well sayd syr Bleoberys, for ye shall fynde him the myghtyest knyght that euer ye hadde adoo withall, for I knowe hym for I haue hadde adoo with hym. God me spede sayd syr Blamor de ganys, and there with he took his hors at the one ende of the lystes, and so they feutryd theyr speres and came to gyders as hit had ben thonder, and there syr Trystram through grete myghte smote doun syr Blamore & his hors to the erthe. And anone syr Blamor auoyded his hors & pulled out his swerde & threwe his shelde afore hym and badde syr Trystram alyght, for though an hors hath fayled me I truste to god the erthe wyl not fayle me. And then syr Trystram alyght and dressyd hym vnto batayll & there they lasshed to gyder strongely as racynge & tracynge, foynynge and dasshynge many sad strokes that the kynges & knyghtes had grete wonder that they myght stande, for euer they fought lyke wood men so that there were neuer knyghtes sene fyghte more fyersly than they dyd, for sire Blamore was so hasty that he wold haue no rest that alle men wondred that they had brethe to stande on their feet, and alle the place was blody that they fought in. And at the laste syre Tristram smote sir Blamor suche a buffet

vpon the helme that he there felle doune vpon his syde, and sir Trystram stode and beheld hym.

Capitulum xxiii.

THENNE whan sir Blamor myghte speke, he said thus. Syre Tristram de Lyones I requyre the as thou art a noble knyghte and the best knyghte that euer I fond that thou wilt slee me oute, for I wold not lyue to be made lord of alle the erth, for I haue leuer dye with worship than lyue with shame, and nedes sir Tristram thou must slee me, or els thou shalt neuer wynne the feld, for I wille neuer saye the lothe word. And therfore yf thou dare slee me, slee me, I requyre the. Whanne sir Tristram herd hym saye soo knyghtely, he wyste not what to doo with hym, he remembryng hym of bothe partyes of what blood he was comen, and for sir Launcelots sake he wold be lothe to slee hym, and in the other party in no wyse he myghte not chese, but that he must make hym to saye the lothe word or els to slee hym. Thenne syre Tristram starte abak and went to the kynges that were juges, and ther he kneled doun to fore hem and besoughte hem for their worshippes and for kynge Arthurs and sir Laũcelots sake that they wold take this mater in theyr handes. For my fayre lordes said sir tristram hit were shame and pyte, that this noble knyght that yonder lyeth shold be slayne, for ye here wel, shamed wille he not be, and I pray to god that he neuer be slayne nor shamed for me. And as for the kyng for whome I fyghte fore I shalle requyre hym as I am his true champyon and true knyght in this felde that he wille haue mercy vpon this good knyghte. So god me helpe said kynge Anguysshe I wil for youre sake syre tristram be ruled as ye wylle haue me. For I knowe you for my true knyghte. And therefore I wylle hertely pray the kynges that ben here as juges to take hit in theire handes. And the kynges that were juges called syr Bleoberys to them, and askyd hym his aduyse. My lordes said Bleoberys, though my broder be beten and hath the wers thorou myghte of armes I dare saye though syre Trystram hath beten his body, he hath not beten his herte, and I thanke god he is not shamed

this daye. And rather than he shold be shamed, I requyre you sayd Bleoberys lete sir Tristram slee hym oute. It shalle not be soo said the kynges, for his parte aduersary bothe the kynge and the champyon haue pyte of syre Blamors knyghthode. My lordes said Bleoberys I wille ryght wel as ye wille.

Thenne the kynges called the kynge of Irland and fond hym goodely and tretabyl. And thenne by alle their aduyses syre Tristram and syre Bleoberys toke vp sire Blamore, and the two bretheren were accorded with kynge Anguysshe, and kyssed and made frendys for euer. And thenne sire Blamor and sire Trystram kyssed to gyders, and there they made their othes that they wold neuer none of them two bretheren fyghte with syre Trystram, and syre Trystram made the same oth. And for that gentyl bataille alle the blood of syre Launcelot loued sire Trystram for euer.

Thenne kynge Anguysshe and syre Tristram toke theire leue and sailed in to Irland with grete noblesse and ioye. Soo whanne they were in Irland, the kynge lete make it knowen thoroute alle the land how and in what manere syre Trystram had done for hym. Thenne the Quene and alle that there were made the moost of hym that they myghte. But the joye that la beale Isoud made of syr Tristram there myghte no tonge telle, for of alle men erthely she loued hym moost.

Capitulum xxiiii.

Thenne upon a daye kynge Anguysshe asked syr Tristram why he asked not his bone. For what someuer he had promysed hym, he shold haue hit withoute fayle. Syre sayd sire Trystram now is hit tyme this is alle that I wylle desyre that ye wylle gyue me la beale Isoud youre doughter not for my self but for myn vnkel kynge Marke that shalle haue her to wyf, for soo haue I promysed hym. Allas said the kynge I had leuer than alle the land that I haue, ye wold wedde her youre self. Syre and I dyd than I were shamed for euer in this world, and fals of my promyse. Therfore said sire Trystram I praye you hold your promyse that ye promysed me, for

this is my desyre that ye wylle gyue me la Beale Isoud to goo with me in to Cornewaile for to be wedded to kynge Marke myn vnkel: As for that sayd kynge Anguysshe ye shalle haue her with you to doo with her what it please you, that is for to saye yf that ye lyst to wedde her your self that is me leuest, And yf ye wille gyue her vnto kynge Marke youre vnkel that is in youre choyse.

Soo to make short conclusion la beale Isoud was made redy to goo with syre Trystram and dame Bragwayne wente with her for her chyef gentylwoman with many other, thenne the quene Isouds moder gaf to her and dame Bragwayne her doughters gentilwoman and vnto Gouernaile a drynke and charged them that what day kynge Marke shold wedde that same daye they shold gyve hym that drynke, soo that kynge Marke shold drynke to la beale Isoud, and thenne said the Quene I vndertake eyther shalle loue other the dayes of their lyf. Soo this drynke was yeuen unto dame Bragwayne and unto Gouernaile. And thenne anone syre Tristram tooke the see, and la Beale Isoud, and whan they were in theire caban, hit happed soo that they were thursty, and they sawe a lytel flacked of gold stande by them, and hit semed by the coloure and the taste that it was noble wyn. Thenne sire Trystram toke the flacket in his hand, and sayd Madame Isoud here is the best drynke that euer ye drank that dame Bragwayne youre mayden and Gouernayle my seruaunt have kepte for them self. Thenne they lough and made good chere and eyther dranke to other frely, and they thoughte never drynke that euer they dranke to other was soo swete nor soo good. But by that theyr drynke was in their bodyes, they loued eyther other so wel that neuer theyr loue departed for wele neyther for wo. And thus it happed the loue fyrste betwixe sire Tristram and la beale Isoud, the whiche loue neuer departed the dayes of their lyf, soo thenne they sayled tyl by fortune they came nyghe a castel that hyght Pluere. And there by arryued for to repose them wenyng to them to haue hadde good herborouz, but anon as sir Tristram was with in the castel, they were taken prysoners, for the custommе of the castel was suche who that rode by that castel and brought ony lady he must nedes fyghte with the lord that hyghte Breunor. And yf it were soo that Breunor wanne the feld, thenne shold the knyght straunger and his lady be

putte to dethe what that euer they were, and yf hit were so that the straunge knyghte wanne the feld of sir Breunor, thenne shold he dye and his lady bothe, this custome was vsed many wynters, for hit was called the castel pluere that is to saye the wepynge castel.

Capitulum xxv.

THUS as sire Trystram and la beale Isoud were in pryson, hit happed a knyght and a lady came vnto them, where they were to chere them. I haue merueille said Tristram vnto the knyzt and the lady what is the cause the lord of this Castel holdeth vs in pryson, hit was neuer the custome of no place of worship that euer I came in, whan a knyghte and a lady asked herborugh, and they to receyue hem, & after to destroye them that ben his gestes. Syr said the knygzt this is the old custome of this castel that whan a knyght cometh here, he must nedes fyghte with our lord, and he that is the weyker muste lese his hede. And whan that is done yf his lady that he bryngeth, be fouler than our lordes wyf, she must lese her heede. And yf she be fayrer preued than is oure lady, thenne shal the lady of this castel lese her heede. Soo god me help said sire Tristram this is a fowle custome and a shameful. But one auaũtage haue I said sir Trystram I haue a lady is fayre ynouz fayrer sawe I neuer in alle my lyfe dayes. And I doubte not for lack of beaute she shalle not lese her heed, and rather than I shold lese my heede I wille fyghte for hit on a fayre felde. Wherfore Syre knyght I pray you telle your lord that I wille be redy as to morne with my lady and my selfe to doo batail yf hit be so I maye haue my hors and myne armour. Syre said that knyght I vndertake that your desyre shalle be spedde ryght wel.

And thenne he sayd take youre rest and loke that ye be vp by tymes and make you redy and your lady, for ye shall wante no thynge that you behoueth, and ther with he departed and on the morne by tymes that same knyghte came to sire Trystram and fetched hym oute and his lady & brouzte hym hors and armour that was his owne, and badde hym make hym redy to the feld, for alle the estates and

comyns of that lordship were there redy to behold that bataille and jugement.

Thenne came syre Breunor the lord of that Castel wyth his lady in his hand muffeld, and asked syre Trystram where was his lady, for and thy lady be fayrer than myn wyth thy swerd smyte of my ladyes hede, and yf my lady be fayrer than thyne, with my swerd I muste stryke of her heed. And yf I maye wynne the, yet shalle thy lady be myne, and thou shalt lese thy hede. Syre said Tristram this is a fowle custome and horryble; and rather than my lady shold lese her heed, yet had I leuer lese my hede. Nay nay said sire Breunor the ladyes shalle be fyrst shewed to gyder, and the one shalle haue her jugement. Nay I wille not soo said sire Tristram, For here is none that wille gyue ryghteuous jugement. But I doubte not said sir Tristram my lady is fayrer than thyne. And that wille I preue and make good with my hand. And who someuer he be that wille saye the contrary I will preue hit on his hede. And there with sire Tristram shewed la beale Isoud, and torned her thryes aboute with his naked swerd in his hand. And whanne syre Breunor sawe that he dyd the same wyse torne his lady. But whanne syre Breunor beheld la beale Isoud, hym thought he sawe neuer a fayrer lady, and thenne he dradde his ladyes hede shold be of, and soo all the peple that were there present gaf jugement that la beale Isoud was the fayrer lady and the better made. how now said sir Tristrā me semeth it were pyte that my lady shold lose her heed, but by cause thou and she of long tyme haue vsed this wycked custome, and by you bothe haue many good knyghtes and ladyes ben destroyed, for that cause it were no losse to destroye you bothe. Soo god me help said sir Breunor for to saye the sothe, thy lady is fayrer than myn, and that me sore repenteth. And soo I here the peple pryuely saye, for of alle wymmen I sawe none soo fayre, and therfor and thou wilt slee my lady I doute not but I shal slee thee and haue thy lady. Thou shalt wynne her said sir Tristram as dere as euer knyzt wan lady. And by cause of thyn owne jugement as thou woldest haue done to my lady yf that she had ben fouler, and by cause of the euyl custome gyue me thy lady said Trystram, & ther with alle sir Tristram strode vnto hym and toke his lady from hym, and with an auke stroke he

smote of her hede clene, wel knyght said sir Breunor now hast thou done me a despyte.

Capitulum xxvi.

Now take thyn hors sythen I am lady les I wil wyn thy lady and I may, thenne they took their horses, & came to gyders as hit had ben the thonder, and sire Trystram smote sir Breunor clene from his hors, and lyztely he rose vp. And as sir Trystram came ageyne by hym, he threst his hors thorou oute both the sholders that his hors hurled here and there, and felle dede to the ground. And euer sir Breunor ranne after to have slayne sire Tristram, but sire Tristram was lyght and nymel and voyded his hors lightely. And or euer sir Trystram myght dresse his sheld and his swerd, the other gaf hym thre or foure sadde strokes. Thenne they rasshed to gyders like two bores tracyng and trauercyng myztely and wysely as two noble knyghtes. For this sire Breunor was a proued knyghte and hadde ben or than the dethe of many good knyghtes, that it was pyte that he had so long endured. Thus they fouzt hurlynge here & there nyz two houres and eyder were wounded sore, thenne at the last sir Breunor rasshed vpon sir Trystram and tooke hym in his armes, for he trusted moche in his strengthe. Thenne was sir Trystram called the strengest and the hyest knyght of the world, For he was called byggar than sir laūcelot, but syr Launcelot was better brethed. Soo anone sire Trystram thrust syr Breunor doune grouelynge, and thenne he unlaced his helme, and strake of his hede. And thenne al they that longed to the castel cam to hym and dyd hym homage and feaute prayenge hym, that he wold abyde there stylle a litel whyle to fordo that foule custom. Syr Trystram graunted ther to, the meane whyle one of the knyghtes of the castel rode vnto sire Galahad the haut prynce, the whiche was sir Breunors sone, whiche was a noble knyzt and told hym what mysauenture his fader hadde and his moder.

Capitulum xxvii.

THENNE came sir Galahad and the kyng with the honderd knyghtes with hym, and this syr Galahad profered to fyghte with sir Trystram hand for hand, and soo they made them redy to go vnto bataile on horsbak with grete courage. Thenne sir Galahad and sir Trystram mette to gyders soo hard that eyder bare other doune hors and alle to the erthe. And thēne they auoyded their horses as noble knyghtes and dressid theire sheldes and drewe their swerdes with jre & rancour, and they lasshed to gyder many sadde strokes, and one whyle strykynge another whyle foynynge, tracynge and trauersynge as noble knyghtes, thus they fought long nere half a day and eyder were sore wounded. At the last sire Trystram waxed lyghte and bygge, and doubled his strokes and drofe syr Galahad abak on the one syde and on the other, so that he was lyke to haue ben slayne. With that came the kynge with the honderd knyghtes and all that felauship went fyersly vpon sir Tristram. When sir Trystram sawe them comyng vpon hym, thenne he wist wel he myghtē not endure. Thēne as a wyse knyght of werre he said to syr Galahaud the haut prynce, syre ye shewe to me no knyghthode for to suffre alle youre men to haue adoo with me al at ones. And as me semeth ye be a noble knyghte of your handes, hit is grete shame to you. So god me helpe said sire Galahad there is none other waye but thou must yelde the to me, outher els to dye said sir Galahad to sir Trystram, I wille rather yelde me to you than dye, for that is more for the myght of your men than of your handes. And ther with alle sir Trystram tooke his owne suerd by the poynte, and put the pomel in the hand of sir Galahad. ther with alle came the kynge with the honderd knyghtes, and hard beganne to assaylle sir Trystram, lete be said sir Galahad be ye not soo hardy to touche hym, for I haue gyuen this knyght his lyf, that is youre shame said the kynge with the C knyghtes, hath he not slayne your fader and your moder. As for that said syre Galahad I may not wyte him gretely for my fader had hym in pryson, and enforced hym to doo bataill with hym, and my fader had suche a customme that was a shameful custome that

what knyght came there to aske herborouh his lady must nedes deye but yf she were fayrer than my moder. And yf my fader ouercame that knyght he must nedes deye. This was a shameful customme and vsage, a knyghte for his herberowe askynge to haue such herborage. And for this customme I wold neuer drawe aboute hym. So god me helpe said the kynge this was a shameful customme. Truly said syre Galahad soo semed me, and me semed it had ben grete pyte that this knyght shold haue ben slayne, for I dare saye he is the noblest man that bereth lyf, but yf it were syr laūcelot du lake. Now fayre knyght said sir Galahad I requyre the telle me thy name, and of whens thou arte, and whyder thou wolt. Syr he said my name is sir Trystram du lyones & from kynge Marke of Cornewaile I was sente on message vnto kynge Anguysshe of Irland for to fetche his doughter to be his wyf, & here she is redy to go with me in to Cornewaile, and her name is la beale Isoud, and, sir Trystram said sir Galahad the haut prynce, wel be ye fonde in these marches, & soo ye wille promyse me to goo vnto syr Launcelot du lake, and accompanye with hym, ye shalle goo where ye wylle, and your fayre lady with you. And I shalle promyse you neuer in al my dayes shal suche custommes be vsed in this castel as haue ben vsed. Syr said syre Trystram now I lete you wete soo god me helpe I wende ye had ben syr launcelot du lake, whan I sawe you fyrste, and therfore I dredde you the more. And sire I promyse you said sir Tristram as soone as I may, I wille see sir launcelot, and enfelaushippe me with hym, for of alle the knyghtes of the world I moost desyre his felaushyp.

Capitulum xxviii.

And thēne sir Tristram took his leue whan he sawe his tyme and tooke the see. And in the meane whyle word came vnto sir Launcelot and to sir Trystram that sire Carados the myghty kynge that was made lyke a gyaunt, that fought with syr Gawayn and gaf hym suche strokes that he swouned in his sadel, and after that he took hym by the coller, and pulled hym oute of his sadel, and fast bounde

hym to the sadel bowe, and so rode his wey with hym toward his castell. And as he rode by fortune sir Launcelot mette with sire Carados and anone he knewe sire Gawayne, that lay bounde after hym. A said sir Launcelot vnto sire Gawayne how stande it with you. Neuer so hard said sir gawayn onles that ye helpe me, for so god me help without ye rescowe me I knowe no knyght that may but outher you or syr Trystram. Wherfor sir Launcelot was heuy of sir Gawayns wordes. And thenne sir Launcelot bad sir Carados leyé doune that knyghte, & fyghte with me. thou arte but a foole saide sire Carados, for I wylle serue you in the same wyse, as for that said sir Launcelot spare me not, for I warne the I wille not spare the. And thenne he bond sir Gawayne hand and foot, and so threwe hym to the ground. And thenne he gate his spere of his squyer, and departed from syr launcelot to fetche his cours, and soo eyther met with other, and brake their speres to their handes, & thenne they pulled out swerdes, and hurtled to gyders on horsbak more than an houre. And at the laste sire launcelot smote sir Carados suche a buffet vpon the helme that it perched his brayne pan. So thenne sir Launcelot toke sir Carados by the coller and pulled hym vnder his hors feet. And thenne he alyzte and pulled of his helme, and strake of his hede. And thenne syr Launcelot vnbounde sir Gawayne. Soo this same tale was told to sir Galahad and to sir Trystram, here maye ye here the noblenes that foloweth sir launcelot. Allas said syr Trystram and I had not this message in hand with this fayre lady, truly I wold neuer stynte or I had fonde syre Launcelot. Thenne sire Trystram and la beale Isoud wente to the see & came in to Cornewaile, and there alle the barons mette hem.

Capitulum xix (xxix.)

And anone they were rychely wedded with grete nobley. But euer as the frensshe book sayth sir Trystram and la beale Isoud loued euer to gyders.

Thenne was there grete justes and grete torneyenge, and many

lordes and ladyes were at that feest, and sir Trystram was most preysed of alle other, thus dured the feest longe, and after the feest was done, within a lytel whyle after by the assent of two ladyes that were with quene Isoud, they ordeyned for hate and enuy for to destroye dame Bragwayne, that was mayden and lady vnto la beale Isoud, and she was sente in to the forest for to fetche herbes, and there she was mette & bounde feete and hand to a tree, and soo she was bounden thre dayes. And by fortune sir Palamydes fond dame Bragwayne, and there he delyuerd her from the dethe, and brought her to a nonnery there besyde for to be recouerd. Whanne Isoud the quene myst her mayden, wete ye wel she was ryght heuy as euer was ony quene, for of alle erthely wymmen she loued her best, the cause was for she came with her oute of her countreye.

And soo vpon a day quene Isoud walked in to the forest to putte aweye her thoughtes, and ther she wente her self vnto a welle, and made grete mone, and sodenly there came Palamydes to her, and had herd alle her complaynte, and sayd Madame Isoud and ye wille graunte me my bone, I shalle brynge to you dame Bragwayne sauf and sound. And the quene was so glad of his profer, that sodenly vnauysed she graũted alle his askynge. Wel madame said Palamydes I trust to your promyse, And yf ye wille abyde here half an houre, I shal brynge her to you. I shall abyde you said la beale Isoud. And sir Palamydes rode forth his way to that nonnery, and lyghtly he came ageyne with dame Bragwayne, but by her good wille she wold not haue comen ageyne, by cause for loue of the quene she stood in auẽture of her lyf. Notwithstandyng half ageynst her wille she wente with sir Palamydes vnto the quene. And whan the quene sawe her, she was passyng glad. Now madame said Palamydes remembre vpon your promyse for I have fulfilled my promyse. Sir Palamydes said the quene I wote not what is your desyre. But I wille that ye wete how be it I promysed you largely I thought none euyl nor I warne you none ylle wille I doo. Madame said sir palamydes, as at this tyme ye shalle not knowe my desyre, but bifore my lord your husband there shalle ye knowe that I wil haue my desyre that ye haue promysed me. And therwith the quene departed and rode home to the kynge, and sir palamydes rode after her. And whan syr

Palamydes came before the kynge, he said sir kyng I requyre you as ye be a ryghteuous kynge that ye wille juge me the ryght. Telle me your cause said the kynge and ye shalle haue ryght.

Capitulum xxx.

Syre said Palamydes I promysed your Quene Isoud to brynge ageyne dame Bragwayne that she had lost vpon this couenaunt that she shold graunte me a bone that I wold aske, and without grutchynge outher auysemēt she graunted me. What saye ye my lady said the kynge, hit is as he saith soo god me help said the quene, to saye the sothe, I promysd hym his askynge for loue and ioye that I had to see her. Wel madame said the kynge, and yf ye were hasty to graunte hym what bone he wold aske, I wylle wel that ye performe your promyse. Thenne said Palamydes I will that ye wete that I wille haue your quene to lede her and gouerne her where as me lyst. There with the kynge stood styll, and be thought hym of sir Trystram, and demed that he wold rescowe her. And thenne hastely the kynge ansuerd take her with the aduētures that shal falle of hit, for as I suppose thou wylt not enioye her noo whyle As for that said Palamydes I dare ryght wel abyde the aduenture, and soo to make short tale, sir Palamydes toke her by the hand, and said Madame grutche not to goo with me, for I desyre no thynge but your own promyse. As for that said the quene I fere not gretely to go with the, hou be it thou hast me at auauntage vpon my promyse. For I doute not I shalle be worshipfully rescowed fro the. As for that said sir Palamydes be it as it be maye. So quene Isoude was sette behynde Palamydes, and rode his way. anon the kynge sente after syr Trystram, but in no wyse he coude be foūde, for he was in the forest an huntyng, for that was alweyes his custome, but yf he vsed armes, to chase and to hunte in the forestes. Allas said the kynge now I am shamed for euer that by myn owne assente my lady and my quene shalle be deuoured. Thenne came forth a knyght his name was lambegus, and he was a knyght of syr Trystram. My lord sayd this knyght sythe ye haue truste in my lord sire Tristram, wete ye wel for his sake I wille ryde

after your quene and rescowe her, or els I shal be beten. Gramercy saide the kynge, & I lyue sir Lambegus I shal deserue hit. And thenne sir Lambegus armed hym, and rode after as fast as he myghte. And thenne within a whyle he ouertoke sir Palamydes. And thenne sir Palamydes lefte the quene. what arte thou saide Palamydes, arte thou Trystram, nay he saide I am his seruaunte, and my name is sir Lambegus, that me repenteth saide Palamydes. I hadde leuer thou haddest ben sire Trystram, I bileue you wel said Lambegus, but when thou metest with sir Trystram thou shalt haue thy handes ful. And thenne they hurtled to gyders and alle to braste their speres, and thenne they pulled oute their swerdes, and hewed on helmes and hauberkes. At the laste sire Palamydes gaf sir Lambegus suche a wound that he felle doun lyke a dede knyghte to the erthe. Thenne he loked after la beale Isoud, and thēne she was gone he nyst where. wete ye wel sir Palamydes was neuer soo heuy. So the quene ranne in to the forest, and there she fond a wel, and theryn she hadde thoughte to haue drouned her self. And as good fortune wold ther came a knyght to her that hadde a Castel ther by his name was sire Adtherp. And when he fonde thē quene in that meschyef, he rescowed her, and broughte her to his castel. And whanne he wyst what she was he armed hym, and took his hors and said, he wold be auengyd vpon palamydes and soo he rode on tyll he mette with hym, and there sir Palamydes wounded hym sore, and by force he made hym to telle hym the cause why he dyd bataille with hym, and how he had ladde the quene vnto his castel. Now brynge me there said palamydes or thou shalt dye of my handes. Sir said sir Adtherp I am soo wounded I may not folowe, but ryde you this way and hit shalle brynge you in to my castel, and there within is the quene. Thenne sire Palamydes rode styll tyl he came to the Castel. And at a wyndowe La Beale Isoud sawe sir Palamydes, thenne she made the yates to be shette strongly. And whan he sawe he myght not come within the castel, he putte of his brydel and his sadel, and putte his hors to pasture, and sette hym self doune atte (the) gate lyke a man that was oute of his wytte that retchyd not of hym self.

Capitulum xxxi.

Now torne we vnto sir Tristram that whanne he was come home, and wyste la Beale Isoud was gone with syr Palamydes wete ye wel he was wrothe oute of mesure. Allas said sir Trystram I am this day shamed. Thenne he cryed to Gouernaile his man, haste the that I were armed and on horsbak, for wel I wote Lambegus hath no myghte nor strengthe to withstande sir Palamydes. Allas that I haue not ben in his stede. Soo anone as he was armed and horsed sir Tristram and Gouernaile rode after in to the forest, and within a whyle he fond his knyght Lambegus al moost woūded to the dethe, and syre Trystram bare hym to a foster, and charged hym to kepe hym wel. And thenne he rode forth and there he fond syr Adtherp sore wounded, and he told hym hou the quene wold haue drouned her self had not he ben. And how for her sake & loue he had taken vpon hym to doo bataille with sir Palamydes. Where is my lady said sire Trystram. Syr said the knyght she is sure ynough within my Castel, & she can hold her within hit. Gramercy said syre Trystram of thy grete goodenes, and soo he rode tyl he came nyghe to that Castel, and thenne syr Trystram sawe where syr Palamydes sat at the gate slepynge, and his hors pastured fast afore hym. Now goo thou Gouernaile said sire Tristram, and byd hym awake, and make hym redy. So Gouernayle rode vnto hym, and said sir Palamydes aryse and take to the thyn harneis, but he was in suche a study he herd not what Gouernayle said. So Gouernaile came ageyne and told syre Trystram he slepte or els he was madde. Goo thou ageyne said sire Tristram and bydde hym aryse, and telle hym that I am here his mortal foō. So Gouernaile rode ageyne and putte vpon hym the but of his spere, and said sir Palamydes make the redy, for wete ye wel syr Tristram houeth yonder and sendeth the word he is thy mortal foo. And there with all sire Palamydes arose stylly withoute wordes and gate his hors, and sadeled hym, and brydeled hym, and lyghtely he lepte vpon, and gat his spere in his hand, and eyder feutryd their speres and hurtled faste to gyders, and there Tristram smote doune sire Palamydes ouer his hors tayle. Thenne

lightely sire Palamydes putte his sheld afore hym and drewe his swerd. And there beganne stronge battail on bothe partyes, for both they fought for the loue of one lady, and euer she laye on the walles and behelde them, hou they foughte oute of mesure, and eyther were woūded passyng sore, but Palamydes was moche sorer woūded. thus they fought tracynge and trauercyng more than two houres that wel nygh for dole and sorowe la beale Isoud swouned. Allas she said that one I loued and yet doo, and the other I loue not, yet it were grete pyte that I shold see sir palamydes slayne, for wel I knowe by that tyme the ende be done, sir Palamydes is but a dede knyzt, by cause he is not crystened I wold be lothe that he shold dye a sarasyn. And there with alle she came doune and bisought sire Trystram to fyghte no more. A madame saide he what meane you, wille ye haue me shamed, wel ye knowe I wille be ruled by you. I wylle not your dishonour saide la beale Isoud but I wold that ye wold for my sake spare this vnhappy sarasyn Palamydes. Madame said syre Trystram I wille leue fyghtyng eat this tyme for your sake.

Thenne she said to sire Palamydes this shalle be your charge that thou shalt goo oute of this countrey whyle I am therin. I wille obeye your commaundement said sire Palamydes, the whiche is sore ageynst my wylle. Thenne take thy waye said la beale Isoud vnto the Courte of kynge Arthur, and there recommaūde me vnto quene Gueneuer, and telle her that I send her word, that ther be withyn this land but four louers, that is sire Launcelot du lake and Quene Gueneuer and sire Trystram de lyonas and quene Isoud.

Capitulum xxxii.

And soo syre Palamydes departed with grete heuynes. And sir Tristram took the quene and brouzte her ageyne to kynge Marke, and thenne was there made grete Joye of her home comynge. Who was cherysshed but sir Trystram. Thenne sir Trystram lete fetche syr Lambegus his knyzte fro the fosters hous and hit was longe or he was hole, but at the last he was wel recouerd, thus they lyued with joye

and play a long whyle. But euer syr Andred that was nygh cosyn to syr Trystram lay in a watche to wayte betwix sir Trystram and la beale Isoud for to take hem and sklaundre hem. Soo vpon a day syr Tristram talked with la beale Isoud in a wyndowe, and that aspyed sir Andred and told it to the kynge. Thenne kynge Marke took a swerd in his hand and came to sir Tristram and called hym fals traitour, and wold haue stryken hym. But sir Trystram was nyghe hym and ranne vnder his swerd and tooke hit oute of his hande. And thenne the kynge cryed where are my knyghtes and my men, I charge you slee this traitour. But at that tyme there was not one wold meue for his wordes. Whanne syre Trystram sawe that there was not one wold be ageynst hym, he shoke the swerde to the kynge and made countenaunce as though he wold haue stryken hym. And thenne kynge Marke fledde, and sire tristram folowed hym and smote vpon hym fyue or sixe strokes flatlynge on the neck that he made hym to falle vpon the nose, & thenne sir Tristram yede his waye and armed hym and tooke his hors and his man, and soo he rode in to that forest. And there vpon a daye syr Trystram mette with two bretheren that were knyghtes with kynge Marke, and there he strake of the hede of the one, & wounded the other to the dethe, and he maade hym to bere his broders hede in his helme vnto the kynge, and thyrtty moo there he wounded. And whan that knyght came before the kynge to saye his message, he there dyed afore the kynge and the quene. Thenne kynge Marke called his counceill vnto hym, and asked aduyse of his barons what was best to doo with sire Trystram. Syr said the barons in especyal Syre Dynas the Seneschal, syr, we will yeue you counceyll for to sende for sir Tristram, for we wille that ye wete, many men wille holde with syre Trystram, and he were hard bestade. And syr said sire Dynas ye shalle vnderstande that sir Tristram is called pyerles and makeles of ony Crysten knyghte, and of his myghte and hardynes we knewe none soo good a knyght, but yf hit be sire Launcelot du lake. And yf he departe from your Courte and goo to kynge Arthurs courte, wete ye wel he wille gete hym suche frendes there that he wylle not sette by your malyce. And therfore syre I counceyle yow to take hym to youre grace. I wylle wel said the kynge that he be sente for, that we maye be

frendes. Thenne the Barons sente for syr Tristram vnder a sauf conduyte. And soo whan syre Tristram came to the kynge, he was welcome, and no rehersail was made, and there was game and playe, and thenne the kynge and the quene wente on huntynge and sir Tristram.

Capitulum xxxiii.

THE kynge and the quene made their pauelions & theire tentes in that forest besyde a Ryuer, and ther was dayly huntynge and justynge, for there were euer xxx knyghtes redy to juste vnto alle them that came in at that tyme. And there by fortune came sire Lamerak de galys and sir Dryaunt, and there syre Dryaunt justed ryght wel, but at the laste he had a falle. Thenne sire Lamerak profered to juste. And whan he began he ferd so with the thyrtty knyztes that there was not one of hem but that he gaf hym a falle, and somme of them were sore hurte. I merueyle said kyng Mark what knyght he is that doth suche dedes of armes. Sir said sire Tristram, I knowe hym wel for a noble knyght, as fewe now ben lyuynge, and his name is sir Lamorak de Galys, it were grete shame saide the kynge that he shold goo thus aweye onles that somme of you mette with hym better. Syre said syre Tristram me semeth it were no worship for a noble man to have adoo with hym. And for by cause at this tyme he hath done over moche for ony meane knyghte lyuynge, therfore as me semeth hit were grete shame and vylony to tempte hym ony more at this tyme, in soo moche as he and his hors are wery bothe. For the dedes of armes that he hath done this daye and they be wel consydered, it were ynough for sir Launcelot du lake.

As for that said kynge Marke I requyre you as ye loue me and my lady the Quene La beale Isoud take youre armes and juste with sire Lamorak de Galys. Syre said sir Tristram ye byd me doo a thynge that is ageynst knyghthode. And wel I can deme that I shal gyue hym a falle. For hit is no maystry, for my hors and I ben fresshe bothe, and so is not his hors and he, and wete ye wel, that he

wil take hit for grete vnkyndenes, For euer one good is lothe to take another at disauauntage. But by cause I wil not displease yow, as ye requyre me, soo wille I do and obeye your commaundemēt. And soo sire Tristram armed hym and took his hors, & putt hym forth, and there sire Lamerak mette hym myghtely, and what with the myght of his owne spere, and of sire Tristrams spere syr Lamoraks hors felle to the erthe, and he syttynge in the sadel. Thenne anone as lyghtly as he myghte he auoyded the sadel and his hors, and put his shelde afore hym and drewe his swerd. And thenne he badde sir Tristram alyghte thou knyght and thou darst. Nay said sire Tristram I wil no more haue adoo with the, for I haue done to the ouer moche vnto my dishonour and to thy worship. As for that said sir Lamorak I can the no thanke, syn thou hast foreiusted me on horsbak I requyre the and I biseche the, and thou be sir Tristram, fyghte with me on foote. I wylle not soo saide ore Tristram. And wete ye wel my name is sire Tristrā de lyones, and wel I knowe ye be sire Lamorak de Galys. And this that I haue done to you was ageynst my wylle, but I was requyred therto, but to saye that I wille doo atte youre request, as at thys tyme I will haue no more ado with you, for me shameth of that I haue done. As for the shame said sire Lamorak on thy party or on myne, beare thou hit & thou wilt. For though a marys sone hath fayled me, now a Quenes sone shalle not fayle the. And therfore and thou be suche a knyghte as men calle the, I requyre the, alyghte, and fyghte with me. Syre Lamorak said sire Tristram I vnderstande youre herte is grete, and cause why ye have, to saye the sothe, for hit wold greue me and ony knyght shold kepe hym fresshe, and thenne to stryke doune a wery knyghte, for that knyghte nor hors was neuer fourmed that alwey myght stāde or endure. And therfore said sire Tristram I wille not have adoo with you, for me forthynketh of that I haue done, as for that said sire Lamorak I shal quyte you and euer I see my tyme.

Capitulum xxxiiii.

Soo he departed from hym with sire Dryaun, and by the weye they mette with a knyzt that was sente from Morgan le fay vnto kynge Arthur, and this knyght hadde a fayre horne harnest with gold, and the horne had suche a vertue that ther myght no lady ne gentilwoman drynke of that horne, but yf she were true to her husband. And yf she were fals she shold spylle alle the drynke. And yf she were true to her lord she myght drynke peasyble, and by cause of the quene Gueneuer and in the despyte of sire Launcelot this horne was sente vnto kynge Arthur, and by force sire Lamorak made that knyghte to telle alle the cause why he bare that horne. Now shalte thou bere this horn sayd Lamorak vnto kyng Marke or els chese thou to dye for it. For I telle the playnly in despyte and repreef of sire Tristrams thou shalte bere that horne vnto kynge Marke his vnkel, and say thou to hym that I sent hit hym for to assay his lady. And yf she be true to hym he shal preue her. Soo the knyghte wente his waye vnto kynge Marke and broughte hym that ryche horne, and sayd that sir Lamorak sente hit hym, and there to he told hym the vertue of that horne. Thenne the kynge maade Quene Isoud to drynke therof, and an honderd ladyes, and there were but four ladyes of alle tho that dranke clene. Allas saide kynge Marke this is a grete despyte, and sware a grete othe, that she shold be brent and the other ladyes.

Thenne the Barons gadred them to gyder and said playnly they wold not have tho ladyes brente for an horne maade by sorcery that came from as fals a sorceresse and wytche as tho was lyuynge. For that horne dyd neuer good but caused stryf and debate, and alweyes in her dayes she had ben an enemy to alle true louers. Soo there were many knyghtes made their auowe, and euer they met with Morgan le fay that they wold shewe her short curtosye. Also sir Tristram was passynge wrothe that sire Lamorak sente that horne vnto kynge Marke for wel he knewe that hit was done in the despyte of hym. And therfor he thoughte to quyte sire Lamorak. Thenne syre Tristram vsed dayly and nyghtely to go to quene Isoud whanne

he myght, and euer syre Andred his cosyn watched hym nyght and daye for to take hym with la Beale Isoud. And soo vpon a nyght syre Andred aspyed the houre and the tyme whan sir Trystram wente to his lady. Thenne syre Andred gate vnto him twelue knyghtes, and at mydnyghte hè sette vpon sire Tristram secretely and sodenly, and there sire Tristram was taken naked a bedde with la beale Isoud, and thenne was he boūd hande and foot, and soo was he kepte vntyl daye. And thenne by the assent of kynge Marke and of syr Andred and of somme of the Barons syre Tristram was ledde vnto a chappel that stode vpon the see rockes there for to take his jugement, and soo he was ledde bounden with fourty knyghtes. And whan sire Tristram sawe that there was none other boote, but nedes that he must dye, thenne said he fayr lordes remembre what I have done for the Countreye of Cornewaile, and in what jeopardy I have ben in for the wele of you alle. For whan I fouzt for the truage of cornewaile with sir Marhaus the good knyght, I was promysed for to be better rewarded, whanne ye alle reffused to take the bataille, therfore as ye be good gentyl knyghtes, see me not thus shamefully to dye, for it is shame to alle knyghthode thus to see me dye. For I dare saye said sire Tristram that I neuer met with no knyght but I was as good as he, or better. Fy vpon the said syr Andred fals traitour that thou arte with thyn auaūcynge, for alle thy boost thou shalt dye this daye. O Andred Andred said sir Tristram thou sholdest be my kynnesman, and now thou art to me ful vnfrendely, but and there were no mo but thou and I, thou woldest not putte me to deth. No said sir Andred, and ther with he drewe his swerd, and wold have slayne hym. Whanne sir Tristram sawe hym make suche countenaunce, he loked vpon bothe his handes that were fast bounden vnto two knyghtes, and sodenly he pulled them bothe to hym, and vnwrast his handes, and thenne he lepte vnto his cosyn syr Andred and wrothe his swerd oute of his handes, thenne he smote sir Andred that he fylle to the erthe, and soo sir Tristram foughte tyl that he hadde kylled x knyghtes. Soo thenne sir Tristram gate the chappel and kepte hit myghtely, thenne the crye was grete, and the peple drewe faste vnto sire Andred moo than an honderd. Whanne sir Tristram sawe the peple drawe vnto hym he remembryd he was

naked, & sperd fast the chappel dore and brake the barrys of a wyndowe, and soo he lepte oute and fylle upon the crackys in the see. And so at that tyme sir Andred nor none of his felawes myghte gete to hym at that tyme.

Capitulum xxxv.

Soo whanne they were departed, Gouernaile and sire Lambegus and sire Sentraille de lushon that were sir Tristrams men soughte their maister. Whanne they herd he was escaped, thenne they were passynge gladde, and on the rockes they fond hym, and with tuels they pulled him vp. And thenne sire Tristram asked hem where was la beale Isoud, for he wende she had ben had aweye of Andreds peple. Syr said Gouernaile she is put in a lazar cote. Allas said syre Trystram this is a ful vngoodely place for suche a fayre lady. And yf I maye she shalle not be longe there. And soo he took his men and wente there as was la Beale Isoud, and fette her aweye and broughte her in to a forest to a fayre manoyre, and sire Tristram there abode with her.

Soo the good knyghte badde his men goo from hym. For att this tyme I maye not helpe you, soo they departed alle sauf Gouernaile. And soo vpon a daye sir Tristram yede in to the forest for to disporte hym, and thenne hit happend, that there he felle on slepe. And there came a man that sire Tristram afore hand had slayne his broder. And whan this man hadde foūd hym he shotte hym thorou the sholder with an arow, and sir Tristram lepte vp and kylled that man. And in the meane tyme it was told kynge Marke, how sir Tristram and la beale Isoud were in that same manoir, and as soone as euer he myght thyder he came with many knyztes to slee sir Tristram. And whanne he came there, he fond hym gone, and there he took la beale Isoud home with hym, and kepte her strayte that by no meane neuer she myght wete nor sende vnto Trystram nor he vnto her. And thenne whanne syre Tristram came toward the old manoir, he fond the trak of many horses, and ther by he wiste his lady was gone. And thenne sir Tristram took grete sorou, and endured

with grete payne long tyme, for the arowe that he was hurte with al was enuenymed.

Thenne by the meane of la Beale Isoud she told a lady that was cosyn vnto dame Bragwayne, and she came to sir Tristram and told hym that he myght not be hole by no meanes, For thy lady la beale Isoud maye not helpe the, therfor she byddeth you haste in to Bretayne to kynge Howel, and there ye shal fynde his douzter Isoud la blaunche maynys, and she shal helpe the. Thenne sir tristram and gouernaile gat them shyppyng, and soo sailed in to Bretayne. And whan kynge Howel wist that it was sir tristram, he was ful gladde of hym. Syre he said I am comen in to this countrey to have help of your doughter. For hit is tolde me, that there is none other may hele me but she, and soo within a whyle she heled hym.

Capitulum xxxvi.

There was an Erle that hyghte Gryp. And this Erle maade grete werre vpon the kynge, and putte the kynge to the werse, and byseged hym. And on a tyme syre kehydyus that was sone to kynge Howel, as he yssued oute, he was sore wounded nyghe to the dethe.

Thenne Gouernaile wente to the kynge and said, syre I counceyle you to desyre my lord syre Tristram as in your nede to helpe you. I wille doo by your counceylle said the kynge, and soo he yede vnto syr Trystram and praid hym in his warres to helpe hym, for my sone syr kehydyus may not goo in to the felde. Sire said sir Tristram I wille goo to the feld and doo what I maye. Thenne sir Tristram yssued out of the towne with suche felaushiip as he myght make, and dyd suche dedes that alle Bretayne spake of hym. And thēne at the last by grete myghte and force he slewe the Erle Gryp with his owne handes, and moo than an honderd knyghtes he slewe that daye. And thenne sire Tristram was receyued worshipfully with procession. Thenne kynge Howel enbraced hym in his armes, and said sire Tristram alle my kyngdome I wille resygne to the. God defende said sir Tristram, For I am beholden vnto you for youre doughters sake to doo for you.

Thenne by the grete meanes of kynge Howel & kehydyus his sone by grete profers there grewe grete loue betwixe Isoud and sire Trystram, for that lady was bothe good and fayre, and a woman of noble blood & fame. And for by cause sir Tristram had suche chere and Rychesse and alle other plesaunce that he hadde, all moost he hadde forsaken la beale Isoud. And soo vpon a tyme sir Trystram agreed to wedde Isoud la blaunche maynys. And at the laste they were wedded, and solempnly held theyr maryage. And soo whanne they were abedde bothe, sire Tristram remembryd hym of his old lady la beale Isoud. And thenne he toke suche a thought sodenly that he was alle desmayed, and other chere maade he none but with clyppynge and kyssynge as for other flesshly lustes sire Trystram neuer thoughte nor hadde adoo with her. suche mencyon maketh the frensshe booke.

Also it maketh mencyon that the lady wende there had ben no pleasyr but kyssynge and clyppynge. And in the meane tyme there was a knyght in Bretayne his name was Suppynabyles, and he came ouer the see in to Englond. And thenne he came in to the court of kynge Arthur, and there he met with sir Launcelot du lake, and told hym of the maryage of syre Tristram. Thenne said sire Launcelot, Fy vpon hym vntrue knyghte to his lady that soo noble a knyghte as sir Trystram is shold be foũde to his fyrst lady fals, la beale Isoud, quene of Cornewaile. But saye ye hym this, said sire Launcelot that of alle knyghtes in the world I loued hym moost, and had moost ioye of hym, and alle was for his noble dedes, and lete hym wete the loue bitwene hym and me is done for euer. And that I gyue hym warnyng from this daye forth as his mortal enemy.

Capitulum xxxvii.

Thenne departed syr Suppynabyles vnto Bretayne ageyne, and there he fond sir Tristram, and told hym, that he had ben in kynge Arthurs courte. Thenne said sir Tristram herd ye ony thynge of me. Soo god me help saide syre Suppynabyles, there I herd sire Launcelot speke of you grete shame, and that ye be a fals knyght to your lady, and he bad me doo you to wete that he wille be your

mortal enemy in euery place where he may mete you. That me repenteth said Tristram, for of alle knyghtes I loued to be in his felauship. Soo syre Tristram made grete mone and was ashamed that noble knyghtes shold deffame hym for the sake of his lady. And in this meane whyle la beale Isoud maade a letter vnto Quene Gueneuer complaynyng her of the vntrouthe of sir Tristram and how he hadde wedded the kynges doughter of Bretayne. Quene Gueneuer sente her another letter, and badde her be of good chere, for she shold have joye after sorou, for sire tristram was so noble a knyzt called, that by craftes of sorcery ladyes wolde make suche noble men to wedde them, but in the ende Quene Gueneuer said hit shal be thus, that he shalle hate her, and loue you better than euer he dyd to fore.

So leue we sire Trystram in Bretayne and speke we of sire Lamerak de galys, that as he sayled his shyp felle on a rok and perysshed all, saue sire Lamerak and his squyer, and there he swam myghtely, and fysshers of the yle of seruage toke hym vp and his squyer was drouned, and the ship men had grete laboure to saue sire Lamoraks lyf, for alle the comfort that they coude doo, and the lord of that yle hyght syre Nabon le noyre a grete myghty gyaunt. And this sir Nabon hated alle the knyghtes of kynge Arthurs, and in no wyse he wold doo hem fauoure. And these fysshers told sir Lamorak alle the gyse of syre Nabon, how there came neuer knyghte of kynge Arthurs but he destroyed hym. And atte last bataille that he dyd was slayne syr Nanowne le petyte, the which he put to a shameful dethe in despyte of kynge Arthur, for he was drawen lymme meale. That forthynketh me said sir Lamerak for that knyghtes dethe, for he was my cosyn. And yf I were at myn ease as wel as euer I was I wold reuenge his dethe. Pees sayd the fysshers and make here no wordes, for or euer ye departe from hens syre Nabon must knowe that ye haue ben here, or els we shold dye for your sake. So that I be hole said Lamorak of my disease, that I haue taken in the see. I wille that ye telle hym that I am a knyzt of kynge Arthurs, for I was neuer aferd to reneye my lord.

Capitulum xxxviii.

Now tourne we vnto sire Trystram that vpon a daye he took a lytel Barget and his wyf Isoud la blaūche maynys with sire kay hedyus her broder to playe hem in the costes. And whan they were from the land, there was a wynde drofe hem in to the coste of Walys vpon this yle of seruage, where as was syre Lamorak and there the Barget all to rofe, and there dame Isoud was hurte, and as wel as they myzte they gate in to the forest, and there by a welle he sawe Segwarydes and a damoysel. And thenne eyther salewed other. syre sayde Segwarydes I knowe you for sire Trystram de Lyones the man in the world that I haue moost cause to hate by cause ye departed the loue bitwene me and my wyf, but as for that sayd Segwarydes, I wil neuer hate a noble knyzt for a lyzt lady. And therfore I pray you be my frende and I wille be yours vnto my power, for wete ye wel, ye are hard bestad in this valey, and we shalle haue ynough to doo eyther of vs to sucoure other. And thenne sir Segwarydes brought sir Trystram to a lady there by that was borne in Cornewaile, and she told hym alle the peryls of that valey, and how ther cam neuer knyght there but he were taken prysoner or slayne. Wete you wel fair lady said sir Trystram that I slewe sire Marhaus and delyuerd Cornewaile from the truage of Irland. And I am he that delyuerd the kynge of Irlande from sire Blamor de ganys, and I am he that bete sire Palamydes, and wete ye wel I am sire Trystram de lyones that by the grace of god shalle delyuer this woful yle of seruage. So sir Trystram was wel eased. thenne one told hym there was a knyghte of kyng Arthurs y^{t} was wrackyd on the rockes. What is his name said sir Tristram. We wote not said the fysshers but he kepeth it no counceil but that he is a knyghte of Kynge Arthurs, and by the myghty lord of this yle he setteth nought by. I praye you said sir Tristram and ye maye brynge hym hyder that I maye see hym. And yf he be ony of the Knyghtes of Arthurs, I shalle knowe hym. Thenne the lady prayed the fysshers to brynge hym to her place. Soo on the morowe they brouzt hym thyder in a fysshers rayment. And as soone as sire Tristram sawe hym he smyled

vpon hym and knewe hym wel, but he knewe not sir Tristram. Fair sir saide sire Tristram me semeth by your chere ye haue ben diseased but late, and also me thynketh I shold knowe you here to fore. I wille wel said sir Lamorak that ye haue sene me and mette with me. Fair sir saide sir tristram telle me your name, vpon a couenaunt I wil telle you said sir Lamorak, that is, that ye wil telle me whether ye be lord of this Iland or noo, that is called Nabon le noyre. For sothe said sir tristram I am not he nor I hold not of hym, I am his foo as wel as ye be, and soo shal I be foũde or I departe oute of this yle. Wel said sir Lamorak syn ye haue saide soo largely vnto me, My name is sire Lamorak de galis sone vnto kynge Pellinore, for sothe I trowe wel said sir tristram, for and ye said other, I knowe the contrary. What are ye said syre Lamorak that knoweth me. I am sir Trystram de lyones. A syre remembre ye not of the falle ye dyd yeue me ones, and after ye refused me to fyghte on foot, that was not for fere I had of you said sire Tristram, but me shamed att that tyme to haue more a doo with you, for me semed ye hadde ynough, but sire Lamorack for my kyndenes many ladyes ye putte to a repreef, whan ye sente the horne from Morgan le fay to kynge Marke where as ye dyd this in despyte of me. Well said he, and it were to doo ageyne, soo wold I doo, for I had leuer stryf and debate felle in kyng Marks courte rather than Arthurs courte, for the honour of bothe courtes be not y lyke. As to that said sir Tristram I knowe wel. But that that was done it was for despyte of me, but alle youre malyce I thanke god hurte not gretely. Therfor said sir Tristram ye shal leue alle your malyce, and soo wille I and lete vs assay hou we may wynne worship bitwene you and me vpon this gyaunt sir Nabon le noyre, that is lord of this Iland to destroye hym. Sir said sir Lamorak now I vnderstande your knyghthode, it maye not be fals that alle men saye, for of your bounte nobles and worship of alle knyghtes ye are pyerles. And for your curtosy and gentilnes I shewed you vngentilnesse, & that now me repenteth.

Capitulum xxxix.

In the meane tyme there cam word that sir Nabon had made a crye that alle the peple of that yle shold be at his castel the fyfthe day after. And the same daye the sone of Nabon shold be made knyghte, and alle the knyghtes of that valey and there about shold be there to juste, and all tho of the Royamme of Logrys shold be there to juste with them of Northwalys, and thyder came fyue honderd knyghtes, and they of the countrey brought thyder syre Lamorak and sir Tristram and syre kehedyus and sire Segwarides, for they durst none other wyse doo, and thenne sir Nabon lent sire Lamorak hors and armour at sire Lamoraks desyre, and sire Lamorak justed and dyd suche dedes of armes that Nabon and all the peple said there was neuer knyzt that euer they sawe do suche dedes of armes, for as the Frensshe book saith he foriusted alle that were there for the moost party of fyue honderd knyghtes that none abode hym in his sadel. Thenne sir Nabon profered to playe with hym his playe, for I sawe neuer no knyghte doo soo moche vpon a daye. I wille wel said sire Lamorak playe as I may but I am wery and sore brysed, and there eyther gate a spere, but Nabon wold not encountre with sire Lamorak, but smote his hors in the forhede and soo slewe hym, and thenne sire Lamorak yede on foote and torned his shelde and drewe his swerd, and there beganne stronge bataill on foote. But sir Lamorak was so sore brysed and shorte brethed that he tracyd and trauercyd somwhat abak. Fair felawe said syre Nabon hold thy hand and I shalle shewe the more curtosye, than euer I shewed knyght, by cause I haue sene this daye thy noble knyghthode. And therfore stand thou by and I wil wete whether ony of thy felawes wille haue adoo with me. Thenne whan sir Tristram herd that, he stepte forth and said Nabon lende me hors and sure armour and I wille haue adoo with the. Wel felawe said sir Nabon goo thou to yonder pauelione and arme the of the best thou fyndest there, and I shalle playe a merueillous playe with the. Thenne said sire Tristram loke ye playe wel or els peraduentur I shalle lerne you a newe play, that is wel said felawe said sir Nabon. So whan sir Tristram was armed as hym lyked best and wel

shelded and swerded, he dressid to hym on foote. For wel he knewe that syr Nabon wold not abyde a stroke with a spere, therfore he wold slee alle knyghtes horses. Now fair felawe said sir Nabon lete vs playe. Soo thenne they foughte longe on foote tracynge and trauercynge, smytynge and foynynge longe withoute ony rest. Atte last sir Nabon praid hym to telle hym his name. Syre Nabon I telle the my name is sir Tristram de lyones a knyzt of Cornewail vnder kynge Marke. thou art welcome said sir nabon, for of alle knyghtes I haue moost desyred to fyghte with the or with sir Launcelot. Soo thenne they went egerly to gyders and sire Tristram slewe sire nabon, and soo forth with he lepte to his sone, and strake of his hede, and thenne al the countrey sayde, they wold holde of sire Tristram, nay saide sire Tristram I wille not soo, here is a worshipfull knyght sir Lamorak de galys that for me he shalle be lord of this countreye, for he hath done here grete dedes of armes. nay said sir Lamorak I wil not be lord of this countrey, for I haue not deserued it as wel as ye, therfore gyue ye hit where ye wille for I will none haue. Wel saide sire Tristram syn ye nor I wille not haue hit, let vs yeue hit to hym that hath not so wel deserued hit. Doo as ye lyst said Segwarydes, for the yefte is yours for I wil none haue and I had deserued hit. Soo was it yeuen to segwarydes wherof he thanked hem, and soo was he lord, & worshipfully he dyd gouerne hit. And thenne sir Segwarydes delyuerd alle prysoners and sette good gouernaunce in that yaley, and soo he torned in to Cornewaile, and told kynge Mark and la beale Isoud how sir Tristram had auaunced hym to the yle of seruage, and there he proclamed in al Cornewaile of alle the aduentures of these two knyghtes, so was hit openly knowen. But ful wo was la Beale Isoud when she herd telle that sire Tristram was wedded to Isoud la blaunche maynys.

Capitulum xl.

Soo torne we vnto sir Lamorak that rode toward Arthurs courte, and sire Tristrams wyf and Kehydyus took a vessel and sailed in to Bretayne vnto kynge Howel where he was welcome. And whan he herd of these aduētures they merueilled of his noble dedes. Now

torne we vnto sir Lamorak that whan he was departed from sire Tristram, he rode oute of the forest tyll he came to an hermytage. Whan the heremyte sawe hym, he asked hym from whens he came. sir said sir Lamorak I come fro this valey, sir said the hermyte therof I merueille. For this xx wynter I sawe neuer no knyght passe this countrey, but he was other slayne or vylaynously wounded or passe as a poure prysoner. Tho ylle customs said sir lamorak are fordone, for sir Tristram slewe your lord syr Nabon and his sone. thenne was the heremyte gladde and all his bretheren, for he said ther was neuer suche a tyraunt among crysten men. And therfor said the hermyte this valey and fraũceis we wille holde of sire Tristram. Soo on the morowe sir Lamorak departed. And as he rode he sawe four knyghtes fyghte ageynst one, and that one knyght defended hym wel, but atte last the four knyghtes had hym doune. And thenne sir Lamorak wente betwixe them, and asked them why they wold slee that one knyght, and said hit was shame four ageynst one. Thou shalt wel wete said the four knyghtes that he is fals. that is youre tale said sir Lamorak. And whanne I here hym also speke, I wille say as ye saye. Thenne said Lamorak, a knyght can ye not excuse you, but that ye are a fals knyghte. Syr said he yet can I excuse me both with my word & with my handes, that I wille make good vpon one of the best of them my body to his body. Thenne spake they al attones, we wil not jeopardy our bodyes as for the. But wete thou wel they saide and kynge Arthur were here hym self it shold not lye in his power to saue his lyf. That is to moche said, said sire Lamorak, but many speke behynde a man more than they wylle saye to his face. And by cause of your wordes ye shalle vnderstande that I am one of the symplest of kynge Arthurs courte, in the worship of my lord now doo your best, and in despyte of you I shalle rescowe hym. And thenne they lasshed alle at ones to sir Lamorak, but anone at two strokes syre Lamorak had slayne two of them, and thenne the other two fledde. Soo thenne sire Lamorak torned ageyne to that knyghte, & asked hym his name. syre he sayde my name is sire Frolle of the oute Iles, thenne he rode with sire Lamorak and bare hym company. And as they rode by the waye, they sawe a semely knyght rydynge ageynst them, and all in whyte. A said Frol

yonder knyght justed late with me and smote me doune, therfore I wil juste with hym, ye shal not doo soo said sire Lamorak by my counceil, and ye wille telle me your quarel whether ye justed at his request, or he at yours. Nay said sir Frol, I justed with hym at my request. Syr said Lamorak, thēne wil I coũceile you dele no more with hym, for me semeth by his countenaunce he shold be a noble knyght, and no japer, for me thynketh, he shold be of the table round, therfor I wil not spare said sir Frol. and thenne he cryed and said, sir knyzt make the redy to just. That nedeth not said the whyte knyghte. For I haue no luste to Juste with the, but yet they feutryd theyr speres, and the whyte knyghte ouerthrewe sire Frol, and thēne he rode his waye a softe paas. Thenne sir Lamorak rode after hym, and praid hym to telle hym his name, for me semeth ye shold be of the felauship of the round table. Vpon a couenaunt said he I wille telle you my name, soo that ye wylle not discouer my name, and also that ye wille telle me yours. Thenne said he my name is sir Lamorak de galys. And my name is sir Launcelot du lake. thenne they putte vp their suerdes, and kyssed hertely to gyders, and eyder made grete joye of other. Syr said sir Lamorak and hit please you I wyll do you seruyse. God defende said Launcelot that ony of soo noble a blood as ye be shold doo me seruyse. Thenne he saide more I am in a quest that I must doo my self alone. Now god spede you said sir Lamorak, and so they departed. Thenne sir Lamorak came to sir Frol and horsed hym ageyne, what knyght is that said sir Frol, sir he said it is not for you to knowe nor it is no poynte of my charge. ye are the more vncurteis saide sire Frol, and therfore I wille departe fro yow. ye may doo as ye lyst said sir Lamorak, and yet by my company ye haue saued the fayrest floure of your garland, soo they departed.

Capitulum xli.

Thenne within two or thre dayes syr Lamorak fond a knyghte at a welle slepynge, and his lady sate with hym and waked. Ryght so came sir Gawayne and toke the knyghtes lady, and sette her vp

behynde his squyer. Soo syre Lamorak rode after syre Gawayne, and said sire Gawayne, torne ageyne. And thenne said sir Gawayne what wylle ye do with me, for I am neuewe vnto kyng Arthur. syre said he for that cause I wil spare you, els that lady shold abyde wyth me, or els ye shold juste with me. Thenne sire Gawayne torned hym and ranne to hym that ought the lady with his spere, but the knyght with pure myght smote doune syre Gawayne, and took his lady with hym. Alle this sir Lamorak saw and said to hym self, but I reuenge my felawe, he will say of me dishonour in kynge Arthurs courte. Thenne sire Lamorak retorned and profered that knyght to juste. Syr said he I am redy, and there they came to gyders with alle their myght, and there sir Lamorak smote the knyght thorou both sydes, that he fylle to the erthe dede. thenne that lady rode to that knyghtes broder that hyght Belliaūce le orgulus, that duelled fast therby, and thenne she told hym how his broder was slayne. Allas said he I wille be reuengyd, and soo he horsed hym, & armed hym, and within a whyle he ouertook syre Lamorak, and badde hym torne and leue that lady, for thou and I must playe a newe playe, for thou hast slayne my broder syre Froll that was a better knyghte than euer were thou. It myghte wel be said sir Lamorak, but this day in the felde I was foūd the better. Soo they rode to gyder, and vnhorsed other, & torned their sheldes, and drewe their swerdes, and foughte myghtely as noble knyghtes preued by the space of two houres. So thēne sir Bellyaunce prayed hym to telle hym his name. Syr said he my name is sire Lamorak de galys. A said syr Bellyaunce, thou arte the man in the world that I moost hate, for I slewe my sones for thy sake, where I saued thy lyf, and now thou hast slayne my broder syr Frol. Allas how shold I be accorded with the, therfore defende the, for thou shalt dye ther is none other remedy. Allas said sir Lamorak ful wel me ought to knowe you, for ye are the man that moost haue done for me. And there with alle sire Lamorak knelyd doune, and bisought hym of grace. Aryse said sir Bellyaunce, or els there as thou knelest I shalle slee thee. That shal not nede saide sire Lamorak, for I wyl yelde me vnto you, not for fere of yow, nor for your strengthe, but your goodenes maketh me ful loth to haue adoo with you, wherfore I requyre you for goddes sake, and for the honour of

knyghthode forgyue me al that I haue offended vnto you. Allas said Belleaunce leue thy knelynge or els I shal slee the withoute mercy. Thenne they yede ageyne vnto batail, and either wounded other that al the ground was blody there as they foughte. And at the laste Belleaunce withdrewe hym abak and sette hym doune softely vpon a lytil hylle, for he was so faynte for bledyng that he myght not stande. Thenne sir lamorak threwe his shelde vpon his bak, and asked hym what chere. Wel said syr Belliaunce. A syr yet shalle I shewe you faueour in your male ease. A knyght syr Belliaunce said syr Lamorak thou arte a foole, for and I had had the at suche auauntage as thou hast done me I shold slee the, but thy gentylnes is so good and so large, that I must nedes forgyue the myn euylle wille. And thenne sire Lamorak knelyd adoune, and vnlaced fyrst hys vmberere, and thenne his owne, and thenne eyther kyssed other with wepynge teres. Thenne sire Lamorak ledde sir Belliaũce to an Abbay fast by, and there sire Lamorak wold not departe from Bellyaunce tyl he was hole. And thenne they sware to gyders that none of hem shold neuer fyghte ageynst other. So syre Lamorak departed and wente to the courte of kynge Arthũr.

Here leue we of sire Lamorak and of sir Tristram. And here begynneth the historye of La cote male tayle.

Capitulum primum.

T the Courte of kynge Arthur there cam a yonge man and bygly made, and he was rychely bysene, and he desyred to be made knyghte of the kyng but his ouer garmēt sat ouerthwartly, how be hit, hit was ryche clothe of gold. What is your name said kynge Arthur. Syre saide he, my name is Breunor le noyre, and within shorte space ye shalle knowe that I am of good kyn. It maye wel be said sir kay the Seneschal, but in mockage ye shalle be called la cote male tayle, that is as moche to saye the euyl shapen cote. Hit is a grete thynge that thou askest said the kyng. And for what cause werest thou that ryche cote, telle me, for I can wel thynke for somme cause hit is. Syre he ansuerd I had a fader a noble knyght. And as he rode on huntynge vpon a daye hit happed hym to leye hym doune to slepe. And there came a knyght that had ben longe his enemy. And whan he sawe he was fast on slepe, he alle to hewe hym. And this same cote had my fader on the same tyme,

and that maketh this cote to sytte soo euyll vpon me, for the strokes ben on hit as I fond hit, and neuer shalle be amendyd for me. Thus to haue my faders dethe in remembraunce I were this cote tyl I be reuengyd, and by cause ye are callyd the moost noblest kynge of the world I come to you that ye shold make me knyght. Sir said sir Lamorak and sir Gaherys, hit were wel done to make hym knyght, for hym besemeth wel of persone, and of countenaunce, that he shall preue a good man and a good knyght, and a myghty, for sire and ye be remembryd euen suche one was sire launcelot du lake, whanne he came fyrste in to this Courte, and full fewe of vs knewe from whens he came, and now is he preued the man of moost worship in the world, and all your courte and alle your Round table is by sire launcelot worshipped and amended more than by ony knyghte now lyuynge. that is trouthe saide the kynge, and to morou att your request I shalle make hym knyght. So on the morou there was an herte founden, and thyder rode kynge Arthur with a company of his knyghtes to slee the herte. And this yonge man that sire kay named la cote male tayle was there lefte behynd with Quene Gueneuer, and by sodeyne aduenture ther was an horryble lyon kepte in a stronge Toure of stone and it happend that he at that tyme brake loos, and came hurlynge afore the Quene & her knyghtes. And whanne the Quene sawe the lyon, she cryed and fledde, and praide her knyghtes to rescowe her. And there was none of hem alle but twelue that abode, and alle the other fledde. Thenne saide La cote male tayle Now I see wel that alle coward knyghtes ben not dede, and there with alle he drewe his swerd, and dressid hym afore the lyon. And that lyon gaped wyde and came vpon hym raumpynge to haue slayne hym. And he thenne smote hym in the myddes of the hede suche a myghty stroke, that it clafe his hede in sonder, and dasshed to the erthe. Thenne was hit tolde the Quene how the yonge man that sire kay named by scorne La cote male tayle hadde slayne the lyon. With that the kyng came home. And whanne the Quene tolde hym of that aduenture, he was wel pleased, and said, vpon payne of myn hede he shalle preue a noble man and a feythful Knyghte and true of his promyse, thenne the kynge forth with al made hym knyght. Now sire said this yonge knyght I requyre you and alle the knyghtes of youre courte, that ye

calle me by none other name but la cote male tayle, in soo moche as syr kay hath soo named me, soo wille I be called, I assente me wel therto said the kynge.

Capitulum secundum.

THENNE that same daye there came a damoysel in to the courte, and she brought with her a grete black shelde, with a whyte hand in the myddes holdynge a swerd. Other pyctour was there none in that shelde. Whan kyng Arthur sawe her, he asked her from whens she came, and what she wold. Syr she said I haue ryden longe and many a day with this sheld many wayes, and for this cause I am come to your courte. There was a good knyght that ought this sheld, & this knyght had vndertake a grete dede of armes to enchieue hit, and soo it mysfortuned hym, another stronge knyght met with hym by sodeyne aduenture, and there they fought longe, & eyther wounded other passynge sore, and they were soo wery, that they lefte that battaille euen hand. Soo this knyghte that ought this shelde sawe none other way but he must dye, & thēne he commaunded me to bere this shelde to the Courte of kynge Arthur, he requyrynge and prayenge somme good knyzt to take this shelde, and that he wold fulfylle the quest that he was in. Now what saye ye to this quest said kynge Arthur. Is there ony of you here that wille take vpon hym to welde this shelde. Thenne was there not one that wold speke one word, thenne sir kay took the shelde in his handes. Sire knyzt said the damoysel what is your name. Wete ye wel said he my name is sir kay the seneschal that wyde where is knowen. Syre said that damoysel laye doune that shelde, for wete ye wel it falleth not for you, for he must be a better knyzt than ye, that shalle welde this shelde. damoysel sayd syr kay wete ye wel I toke this sheld in my handes by youre leue, for to behold it not to that entent, but goo where someuer thou wilt, for I will not go with you. Thenne the damoysel stode stylle a grete whyle and byheld many of tho knyghtes. Thenne spak the knyght La cote male tayle, fayre damoysel I wille take the sheld and that aduenture vpon me, soo I wyst I shold knowe, wheder ward my

iourney myght be, for by cause I was thys daye made knyght I wold take this aduenture vpon me.

What is your name fayre yonge man said the damoysel. My name is said he la cote male tayle. Wel mayst thou be called so said the damoysel, the knyzt with the euylle shapen cote, but & thou be soo hardy to take vpon the to bere that shelde and to folowe me, wete thou wel, thy skyn shalle be as wel hewen as thy cote. As for that said la cote male tayle whan I am soo hewen I wille aske you no salue to hele me with alle. And forth with all ther came in to the Court two squyers & brouzt hym grete horses and his armour and his speres, and anone he was armed and tooke his leue. I wold not by my will said the kynge that ye took vpon you that hard aduenture. sir said he, this aduenture is myn, and the fyrst that euer I took vpon me, and that wille I folowe what someuer come of me. Thenne that damoysel departed, and la cote male tayle fast folowed after. And within a whyle he ouertook the damoysell and anone she myssaid hym in the fowlest maner.

Capitulum Tercium.

THENNE sire kay ordeyned sir dagonet, kynge Arthurs foole to folowe after la cote male taile, and there sir kay ordeyned that sir Dagonet was horsed and armed and bad hym folowe la cote male taile, and profer hym to juste and soo he dyd, and whan he sawe la cote male tayle he cryed and badde hym make hym redy to juste. Soo sir la cote male tayle smote sir Dagonet ouer his hors croupe. Thenne the damoysel mocked la cote male tayle, and said fy for shame, now art thou shamed in Arthurs courte, whan they sende a foole to haue adoo with the, and specially at thy fyrst Justes, thus she rode longe and chyde. And within a whyle there came sir Bleoberys the good knyght, and there he justed with la cote male tayle, and there syre Bleoberys smote hym so sore that hors and alle felle to the erth. Thenne la cote male tayle arose vp lyghtely and dressid his sheld, and drewe his suerd and wold haue done bataill to the vtteraūce, for he was wode wrothe. Not soo said Bleoberys de ganys,

as at this tyme I wille not fyghte vpon foote. Thenne the damoysel Maledysaũt rebuked hym in the foulest maner, and badde hym torne ayene coward. A damoysel he said I pray you of mercy to myssaye me no more, my gryef is ynough though ye gyue me no more, I calle my self neuer the wers knyght, whan a marys sone fayleth me, and also I compte me neuer the wers knyght for a falle of sir Bleoberys. Soo thus he rode with her two dayes, and by fortune there came sir Palomydes and encountred with hym, and he in the same wyse serued hym as dyd Bleoberys to fore hand. What dost thou here in my felauship saide the damoysel maledysaunt, thou canst not sytte no knyghte, nor withstande hym one buffet, but yf hit were sir dagonet. A fair damoysel I am not the wers to take a falle of sire Palamydes, and yet grete disworship haue I none, for neyder Bleoberys nor yet palamydes wold not fyghte with me on foote. As for that said the damoysel wete thou wel they haue desdayne and scorne to lyghte of their horses to fyghte with suche a lewd knyght as thou arte. Soo in the meane whyle ther cam sir Mordred, sir Gawayns broder, and soo he felle in the felauship with the damoysel maledysaunt. And thenne they came afore the castel Orgulous, and there was suche a customme that there myght no knyght come by that castel, but outher he must juste or be prysoner, or at the lest to lese his hors and his harneis. and there came oute two knyghtes ageynst them, and sir Mordred justed with the formest, and that knyght of the castel smote sire Mordred doune of his hors, and thenne la cote male tayle justed with that other, and eyther of hem smote other doune hors and alle to the erthe. And whanne they auoyded their horses, thenne eyther of hem took others horses.

And thenne la cote male tayle rode vnto that knyght that smote doune sire Mordred and justed with hym. And there syre La cote male tayle hurte & wounded hym passynge sore and putte hym from his hors as he had ben dede. So he torned vnto hym that mette hym afore, and he took the flyght toward the castel, and sire la cote male tayle rode after hym in to the Castel Orgulous, and there la cote male tayle slewe hym.

Capitulum iiii.

And anone there came an honderd knyztes about hym and assaylled hym, and whan he sawe his hors shold be slayne, he alyghte and voyded his hors, & putte the brydel vnder his feete, and so put hym out of the gate. And whan he had soo done, he hurled in amonge hem, and dressid his bak vnto a ladyes chamber walle, thynkynge hym self that he had leuer dye there with worship, than to abyde the rebukes of the damoisel Maledysaunt. And in the meane tyme as he stood & fouzt, that lady whos was the chamber wente oute slyly at her posterne, and without the gates she fond la cote male tayles hors and lyghtly she gate hym by the brydel, and teyed hym to the posterne. And thenne she wente vnto her chambre slyly ageyn for to behold hou that one knyghte fought ageynst an honderd knyghtes. And whan she had behold hym longe, she wente to a wyndowe behynde his bak, and said thou knyght thou fyghtest wonderly wel, but for alle that at the last thou must nedes dye. But and thou canst thorou thy myzty prowesse wynne vnto yonder posterne, for there haue I fastned thy hors to abyde the, but wete thou wel thou must thynke on thy worship, & thynke not to dye, for thou maiste not wynne vnto that posterne without thou doo nobly and myghtly. Whan la cote male tayle herd her saye so, he gryped his swerd in his handes and putt his sheld fayre afore hym, & thorou the thyckest prees he thrulled thorou them. And whan he came to the posterne, he fond there redy four knyghtes, and at two the fyrst strokes he slewe two of the knyghtes, & the other fledde, & soo he wanne his hors and rode from them, and alle as it was it was reherced in kynge Arthurs courte, hou he slewe twelue knyghtes within the castel Orgulous, and so he rode on his waye. And in the meane whyle the damoysel said to sir Mordred I wene my foolysshe knyzt be outher slayn or takē prysoner, thēne were they ware where he came rydyng. And whan he was come vnto them, he told alle how he hadde spedde, and escaped in despyte of them alle, and somme of the best of hem wille telle no tales. Thou lyest falsly saide the damoysel, that dare I make good, but as a foole and a dastard to alle

knyghthode, they haue lete the passe, that may ye preue said La cote male tayle. With that she sente a currour of hers that rode alweye with her for to knowe the trouthe of this dede, and soo he rode thydder lyghtly, and asked how and in what maner that la cote male tayle was escaped oute of the castel. Thenne alle the knyghtes cursyd hym and said that he was a fende and noo man. For he hath slayne here twelue of oure best knyghtes, & we wende vnto this daye that hit had ben to moche for sir laūcelot du lake or for sire Tristram de lyones. And in despyte of vs alle he is departed from vs and maulgre our hedes.

With this ansuer the currour departed and came to Maledysaunt his lady, and told her alle how syr la cote male tayle had spedde at the castel Orgulous. Thenne she smote doun her heed, and sayd lytel.

By my hede said sir Mordred to the damoysel ye are gretely to blame so to rebuke hym, for I warne you playnly he is a good knyghte, and I doubte not, but he shalle preue a noble knyghte, but as yet he may not yet sytt sure on horsbak, for he that shalle be a good horsman, hit must come of vsage and excercyse. But whan he cometh to the strokes of his swerd, he is thenne noble and myghty, and that sawe sire Bleoberys and sir Palamydes, for wete ye wel they are wyly men of armes, and anon they knowe whan they see a yonge knyghte by his rydyng, how they ar sure to yeue hym a falle from his hors or a grete buffet. But for the moost party they wille not lyghte on foote with yonge knyghtes. For they are wyght and strongly armed. For in lyke wyse sir launcelot du lake whan he was fyrste made knyghte he was often putte to the werse vpon horsbak, but euer vpon foote he recouerd his renomme, and slewe and defoyled many knyghtes of the round table. And therfor the rebukes that sir Launcelot dyd vnto many knyghtes causeth them that be men of prowesse to beware, for often I haue sene the old preued knyghtes rebuked and slayne by them that were but yonge begynners. Thus they rode sure talkynge by the way to gyders.

Here leue we of a whyle of this tale and speke we of sire Launcelot du lake.

Capitulum Quintum.

THAT whan he was come to the courte of kynge Arthur, thenne herd he telle of the yonge knyghte la cote male tayle how he slewe the lyon, & how he tooke vpon hym the aduenture of the black shelde, the whiche was named atte that tyme the hardyest aduenture of the world. Soo god me saue said sir Laūcelot vnto many of his felawes, it was shame to alle the noble knyghtes to suffre suche a yonge knyghte to take suche aduenture vpon hym for his destructyon, for I wille that ye wete said sire launcelot, that that damoysel maledysaunt hath born that shelde many a day for to seche the most proued knyghtes, and that was she that Breunys saunce pyte took that sheld from her, and after Tristram de lyones rescowed that shelde from hym, and gaf it to the damoysell ageyne.

A lytil afore that tyme that sir Tristram fought with my neuewe sire Blamore de Ganys for a quarel that was betwixe the kynge of Irland and hym. Thenne many knyghtes were sory that sir La cote male tayle was gone forth to that aduenture. Truly said sir launcelot, I cast me to ryde after hym, and within seuen dayes sir launcelot ouertook la cote male tayle. And thenne he salewed hym, and the damoysel maledysaunt.

And whan sir Mordred sawe sir laūcelot, thenne he lefte their felauship, and soo sir launcelot rode with hem al a day, and euer that damoysel rebuked la cote male taile, and thenne sire launcelot answerd for hym, thenne she lefte of, and rebuked sir launcelot. Soo this meane tyme syre Tristram sente by a damoysel a letter vnto sire launcelot excusynge hym of the weddynge of Isoud la blaunche maynys, and said in the letter as he was a true knyzt, he hadde neuer adoo flesshly with Isoud la blaunche maynys, and passynge curtoisly & gentyly sir tristram wrote vnto sire launcelot, euer besechyng hym to be his good frende, & vnto la beale Isoud of Cornewaile, and that sire Launcelot wold excuse hym yf that euer he sawe her. And within shorte tyme by the grace of god said sir Tristram that he wold speke with la Beale Isoud and with hym ryghte hastely. Thenne sire Launcelot departed from the damoysel

& from syr. la cote male taile for to ouersee that letter, and to wryte another letter vnto syre Tristram de lyones, and in the meane whyle la cote male tayle roode with the damoysel vntyl they came to a castel that hyght Pendragon, and there were syxe knyghtes stode afore hym, and one of hem profered to juste with la cote male tayle. And there la cote male tayle smote hym ouer his hors croupe. And thenne the fyue knyghtes sette vpon hym all at ones with their speres, & there they smote la cote male tayle doune hors and man. And thenne they alyght sodenly, and sette their handes vpon hym all attones, and toke hym prysoner, and soo ledde hym vnto the castel, & kepte hym as prysoner. And on the morne sir Launcelot arose and delyuerd the damoysel with letters vnto sir Tristram, & thenne he took his way after la cote male tayle, & by the waye vpon a brydge there was a knyghte profered sire Launcelot to juste, and sire Launcelot smote hym doune, and thenne they foughte vpon foote a noble batail to gyders and a myghty, & at the laste sire Launcelot smote hym doune grouelynge vpon his handes and his knees. And thenne that knyghte yelded hym, and sire launcelot receyued hym fayre. Syr said the knyght I requyre the telle me your name, for moche my herte yeueth vnto you. Nay said sire Launcelot as at this tyme I wil not telle you my name, onles thenne that ye telle me your name. Certaynly said the knyght my name is sir Nerouens that was made knyght of my lord sir Launcelot du lake. A Nerouens de lyle said sire Launcelot I am ryght gladde that ye ar proued a good knyghte, for now wete ye wel my name is sir Launcelot du lake. Allas said sire Nerouens de lyle what haue I done, and there with al flatlyng he felle to his feet, and wold haue kyst them, but sir Launcelot wold not lete hym, & thenne eyther made grete ioye of other. And thenne sire Nerouens told sir Launcelot that he shold not goo by the castel of Pendragon, for there is a lord a myghty knyght, and many knyghtes with hym, and this nyght I herd say that they toke a knyght prysoner yesterday that rode with a damoysel, & they saye he is a knyghte of the round table.

Capitulum vi.

A SAID sir Launcelot that knyght is my felawe, & hym shalle I rescowe or els I shalle lese my lyf therfore. And there with alle he rode fast tyl he came before the Castel of Pendragon, and anone there with alle there cam vi knyghtes, and alle made hem redy to sette vpon sire Launcelot at ones, thenne sire Laũcelot feutryd his spere, and smote the formest that he brake his bak in sonder, and thre of them hytte and thre fayled. And thenne sire launcelot past thorou them, and lyghtly he torned in ageyne, and smote another knyghte, thorugh the brest and thorou oute the bak more than an ell, & ther with alle his spere brak.

Soo thenne alle the remenaunt of the four knyghtes drewe their swerdes and lasshed at syre Launcelot. And at euery stroke sire launcelot bestowed so his strokes that at four strokes sondry they auoyded theyr sadels passynge sore wounded, and forthe with alle he rode hurlynge in to that castel. And anon the lord of the castel that was that tyme cleped sir Bryan de les yles the which was a noble mā and a grete enemy vnto kyng arthur, within a whyle he was armed and vpon horsbak. And thenne they feutryd their speres and hurled to gyders soo strongly that bothe theire horses rasshed to the erthe. And thenne they auoyded their sadels, & dressid their sheldes and drewe theire swerdes and flange to gyders as wood men, and there were many strokes yeuen in a whyle. at the last sir launcelot gaf to sir Bryan suche a buffet that he kneled vpon his knees, and thenne sir launcelot rasshed vpon hym, and with grete force he pulled of his helme, and whanne sire Bryan sawe that he shold be slayne he yelded hym and put hym in his mercy and in his grace. Thenne sire launcelot made hym to delyuer alle his prysoners that he had within his castel, and therin sir laũcelot fonde of arthurs knyghtes thyrtty, and .xl. ladyes, and soo he delyuerd hem, and thenne he rode his waye, and anon as la cote male tayle was delyuerd he gat his hors and his harneis, and his damoysel Maledysaunt, the meane whyle syre Nerouens that sir Launcelot had foughten with alle afore at the brydge, he sente a damoysel after sir Launcelot to wete hou he spedde

at the Castell of Pendragon. And thenne they within the castel merueylled what knyght he was whan syr Bryan and his knyghtes delyuerd alle tho prysoners. haue ye no merueille said the damoysel, for the best knyghte in this world was here, and dyd this iourney, and wete ye wel she said it was sire launcelott. Thenne was sir Bryan ful gladde and soo was his lady, & alle his knyghtes, that suche a man shold wynne them. And whan the damoysel and la cote male tayle vnderstood that it was syr Launcelot du lake that had ryden with them in felaushíp, And that she remembryd her hou she had rebuked hym and callyd hym coward, thenne was she passynge heuy.

Capitulum septimum.

Soo thenne they took their horses and rode forth a pas after sire Launcelot. And within two myle they ouertook hym, and salewed hym, and thanked hym, and the damoysel cryed sir Launcelot mercy of her euyll dede, and sayenge, for now I knowe the floure of alle knyghthode is departed euen bitwene sire Tristram and you. For god knoweth said the damoysel that I haue soughte you my lord sir Launcelot and sir Tristram longe, and now I thanke god I haue mette with you, and ones at Camelot I mette with sir Tristram, and ther he rescowed this blak shelde with the whyte hand holdynge a naked swerd, that sir Bruyns saunce pyte had taken from me. Now fayre damoysel said sir Launcelot who told you my name. Syre said she, there came a damoysell from a knyghte that ye fought with all at the brydge, and she told me your name was sir Launcelot du lake. blame haue she thenne said sire Launcelot, but her lord sire Neroueus hath told her. But damoysel said sire Launcelot vpon this couenaunt I wille ryde with you, so that ye wille not rebuke this knyght sir La cote male tayle no more, for he is a good knyght and I doubte not he shalle preue a noble knyght, and for his sake and pyte that he sholde not be destroyed, I folowed hym to socoure hym in this grete nede. A, Jhesu thanke you said the damoysel, for now I wil say vnto you and to hym both, I rebuked hym neuer for no hate that I hated hym, but for grete loue that I had to hym. For euer

I supoosed that he had ben to yonge and to tendyr to take vpon hym these aduentures. And therfore by my wille I wold haue dryuen hym aweye for jalousy that I had of hys lyf, for it maye be no yong knyghtes dede that shal enchyeue this aduenture to the ende. Per dieu said sire Launcelot hit is wel said, and where ye are called the damoysel Maledysaunt I wille calle you the damoysel Bien pensaunt, and soo they rode forthe a grete whyle vnto they came to the Bordoure of the countrey of Surluse, and there they fond a fayr vyllage with a stronge brydge lyke a fortresse. And whanne sir launcelot and they were at the bridge, there starte forth afore them of gentilmen and yomen many that saide, Faire lordes ye maye not passe this brydge and this fortresse by cause of that black shelde that I see one of you bere. And therfore there shalle not passe but one of you at ones, therfore chese you whiche of you shalle entre withynne this brydge fyrste. Thenne sir Launcelot profered hym selfe fyrst to entre within this brydge. Syr said La cote male tayle, I biseche you lete me entre within this fortresse, and yf I may spede wel, I wille sende for you, and yf it happend that I be slayn, there it goth. And yf soo be that I am a prysoner taken, thenne maye ye rescowe me. I am lothe said sir launcelot to lete you passe this passage. Syre said la cote male tayle I praye you lete me putte my body in this aduenture. Now goo youre waye said sire Laũcelot, and Jhesu be your spede. So he entrid and anone there mette with hym two bretheren, the one hyzte syr Playne de force and the other hyght sir Playne de amours. And anone they mette with sir la cote male tayle, and fyrste la cote male tayle smote doune Playne de force, and after he smote doune playne de amours, and thenne they dressid them to their sheldes and swerdes, and badde la cote male tayle alyghte, and soo he dyd, and there was dasshyng and foynyng with swerdes, and soo they began to assaile ful hard la cote male tayle, and many grete woundes they gaf hym vpon his heed and vpon his brest and vpon his sholders. And as he myght euer amonge he gaf sadde strokes ageyne.

And thenne the two bretheren traced and trauercyd for to be of bothe handes of sire la cote male tayle, but he by fyne force & knyghtly prowesse gate hem afore hym. And thenne whan he felte

hym self soo wounded, thenne he doubled his strokes, & gaf them soo many woundes that he feld them to the erthe, & wold haue slayne them had they not yelded them. And ryzt soo sire la cote male tayle tooke the best hors that there was of them thre, and soo rode forth his waye to the other fortresse & brydge and there he mette with the thyrd broder whoos name was sire Plenorius, a ful noble knyghte, and there they justed to gyder, and eyther smote other doune hors and man to the erthe. And thenne they auoyded their horses, and dressid their sheldes, and drewe their swerdes, and gaf many sad strokes, and one whyle the one knyght was afore on the brydge, and an other whyle the other. And thus they foughte two houres and more, and neuer rested. And euer sire Launcelot and the damoysel beheld them. Allas said the damoysel my knyghte fyghteth passynge sore and ouer longe. Now may ye see said sir Launcelot that he is a noble knyghte for to consydre his fyrste bataile, and his greuous woundes. And euen forth with all so wounded as he is, it is merueile that he may endure this longe batail with that good knyghte.

Capitulum Octauum.

This meane whyle syre la cote male tayle sanke ryghte doun vpon the erthe, what forwounded and what forbled he myghte not stande. Thenne the other knyghte hadde pyte of hym, and sayd fayr yonge knyghte desmaye you not, for had ye ben fresshe whan ye mette with me, as I was, I wote wel that I shold not haue endured so longe as ye haue done, and therefore, for youre noble dedes of armes, I shall shewe to you kyndenes and gentylnesse in alle that I maye. And forth with al this noble knyght sir Plenorius took hym vp in his armes, and ledde hym in to his toure. And thenne he commaunded him the wyn, and made to serche hym and to stoppe his bledynge woundes. Syre said la cote male tayle withdrawe you from me, and hyhe you to yonder brydge ageyne, for there wille mete with you another maner knyght than euer was I. Why said Plenorius, is there another maner knyght behynde of your felauship, ye said la cote male tayle, ther is a moche better knyght than I am.

What is his name sayd Plenorius, ye shalle not knowe for me, said la cote male tayle. Wel said the knyght, he shalle be encountred with alle, what someuer he be. Thenne sir Plenorius herd a knyght calle, that sayd syr Plenorius where art thou, outher thou must delyuer me the prysoner that thou hast led vnto thy toure, or els come and doo bataile with me. Thenne Plenorius gat his hors, and came with a spere in his hand walloppynge toward syr launcelot, and thenne they beganne to feutre their speres, and came to gyders as thonder, and smote eyther other so myghtely that their horses felle doune vnder them. And thenne they auoyded their horses, and pulled out their swerdes, & lyke two bulles they lasshed to gyders with grete strokes and foynes, but euer syr launcelot recouerd ground vpon hym, and sire Plenorius traced to haue gone aboute hym. But sire launcelot wold not suffer that, but bare hym backer and backer, tyll he came nyghe his toure gate. And thenne said sire launcelot I knowe the wel for a good knyght, but wete thou wel, thy lyf and dethe is in my hand, and therfore yelde the to me, and thy prysoner. The other ansuerd no word, but strake myztely vpon sir laūcelots helme that the fyre sprange out of his eyen, thenne syre Launcelot doubled his strokes soo thyck, and smote at hym so myghtely that he made hym knele vpon his knees. And there with sir launcelot lepte vpon hym, and pulled hym grouelyng doune. Thenne sir Plenorius yelded hym, and his toure, and alle his prysoners at his wille. thenne sir launcelot receyued hym and took his trouthe, and thēne he rode to the other brydge, and there sir launcelot justed with other thre of his bretheren, the one hyght Pillounes, and the other hyght Pellogris and the thyrdde sir Pellandris, and fyrste vpon horsbak syr launcelot smote hem doune, and afterward hē bete them on foote, and made them to yelde them vnto hym, and thenne he retorned vnto sir Plenorius, and there he fond in his pryson kyng Carados of scotland and many other knyghtes, and alle they were delyuerd. And thenne sire la cote male tayle came to sire launcelot, and thenne sir launcelot wold haue yeuen hym alle these fortresses and these brydges. Nay said la cote male tayle I wille not haue sire Plenorius lyuelode, with that he wylle graunte you my lord sire launcelot to come vnto kynge Arthurs courte and to be his knyght and alle his bretheren I will pray you my

lord to lete hym haue his lyuelode. I wille wel said sire launcelot, with this that he wille come to the Courte of kynge Arthur and bicome his man, and his bretheren fyue. And as for you sir Plenorius I wille vndertake said sir Launcelot at the next feest soo there be a place voyded that ye shalle be knyght of the round table. Syr said Plenorius atte next feest of Pentecost I wille be at Arthurs courte, and at that tyme I wille be guyded and ruled as kynge Arthur & ye wille haue me. Thenne sir Launcelot and sire la cote male tayle reposed hem there vnto the tyme that sire la cote male tayle was hole of his woundes, and there they hadde mery chere and good rest and many good gamys, and there were many fayre ladyes.

Capitulum Nonum.

And in the meane whyle came sir kay the seneschal and sire Brandyles, and anone they felaushypped wyth them. And thenne within ten dayes thēne departed tho knyghtes of Arthurs Courte from these fortresses. And as sir laūcelot came by the castel of Pendragon, there he putte syr Bryan de les yles from his landes, for cause he wold neuer be withold with kynge Arthur, and alle that castel of Pendragon, and alle the landes therof he gaf to sire la cote male tayle, & thēne sir launcelot sente for Neroneus that he made ones knyghte, and he made hym to haue alle the rule of that castel, & of that countrey vnder la cote male tayle, and soo they rode to Arthurs courte al holy to gyders. And at Pentecost next folowynge there was sire Plenorius and sir la cote male tayle called otherwyse by ryght syr Breunes le noyre bothe maade knyghtes of the table round, and grete londes kynge Arthur gaf them, and there Breune le noyre wedded that damoysell Maledysaunt. And after she was called Beau viuante, but euer after for the more party he was called la cote male tayle, and he preued a passynge noble knyghte and myghty, & many worshipful dedes he dyd after in his lyf, and sire Plenorius proued a noble knyght and ful of prowesse, and alle the dayes of their lyf for the moost party they awayted vpon sir laūcelot, and sire Plenorius bretheren were euer knyghtes of kynge Arthur. and also as the

frensshe book maketh mencyon, syr la cote male tayle auengyd his faders dethe.

Capitulum x.

Now leue we here sire la cote male tayle, and torne we vnto sir Tristram de lyones that was in Bretayne. Whanne la beale Isoud vnderstode that he was wedded, she sent to hym by her mayden Bragwayne as pyteous letters as coude be thoughte and made, and her conclusion was, that, and hit pleasyd syr Tristram, that he wold come to her courte, and brynge with hym Isoud la blaunche maynys, and they shold be kepte as wel as she her self. Thenne sir Tristram called vnto hym syr kehydius, and asked hym whether he wold go with hym in to Cornewaile secretely. He ansuerd hym that he was redy at al tymes. And thenne he lete ordeyne pryuely, a lytel vessel, and therin they wente syr Tristram, kehydius, Dame Bragwayne and Gouernaile syr Tristrams squyer. So when they were in the see, a contraryous wynde blewe hem on the costes of North Walys nygh the castel peryllous. Thenne sayd sir Tristram here shalle ye abyde me these ten dayes, and Gouernaile my squyer with you, And yf so be I come not ageyne, by that daye, take the next way in to Cornewaile, for in thys forest are many straunge aduentures, as I haue herd saye, & somme of hem I caste me to preue or I departe. And whanne I maye, I shalle hyhe me after you. Thenne sir Tristram and kehydius took their horses and departed from their felauship. And soo they rode within that forest a myle and more. And at the last sir Tristram sawe afore hym a lykely knyzt armed syttynge by a Welle, and a stronge myghty hors passyng nyghe hym teyed to an Oke and a man houynge and rydynge by him ledynge an hors lade with speres. And this knyghte that satte at (the) Welle, semed by his countenaunce to be passyng heuy. Thenne sire Tristram rode nere hym, and said fayr knyzt why sytte ye soo droupyng, ye seme to be a knyght erraunt by your armes and harneis, and therfor dresse you to Juste with one of vs or with bothe. There with all that knyghte made noo wordes, but took his shelde and bokeled hit aboute his neck, and lyghtely he

took his hors and lepte vpon hym. And thēne he took a grete spere of his squyer, and departed his waye a furlonge. Sire kehydius asked leue of sir Tristram to juste fyrst, doo your best said sire Tristram. soo they mette to gyders and there sir kehydius had a falle, and was sore wounded, on hyghe aboue the pappys. Thenne sir Tristram said, knyzt that is wel justed. Now make you redy vnto me. I am redy said the knyght. And thenne that knyght took a gretter spere in his hand, and encountred with sir Tristram, and there by grete force that knyght smote doune sir Tristram from his hors and had a grete falle. Thenne sir Tristram was sore ashamed, and lyghtly he auoyded his hors, and put his sheld afore his sholder and drewe his swerd. And thenne sire Trystram requyred that knyghte of his knyghthode to alyghte vpon foote and fyghte with hym. I wille wel said the knyght, and soo he alyghte vpon foote, and auoyded his hors, and cast his shelde vpon his sholder, and drewe his swerd, and there they fought a longe bataile to gyder ful nyghe two houres.

Thenne sir Tristram said fayr knyght hold thyn hand, & telle me of whens thou arte, and what is thy name. As for that said the knyght, I wille be auysed, but and thou wolt telle me thy name, peraduenture I wille telle the myn.

Capitulum xi.

Now fayr knyght he said, my name is sire Tristram de lyones. Syrè saide the other knyght, and my name is sir lamorak de galys. A sir lamorak said sir Tristram, well be we mette, and bethynke the now of the despyte thou dydest me of the sendyng of the horne vnto kynge Markes courte to the entente to haue slayne or dishonoured my lady the Quene la Beale Isoud, and therfore wete thou wel said sir Tristram the one of vs shall dye or we departe. Sire said sir Lamorak, remembre that we were to gyders in the yle of seruage, and at that tyme ye promysed me grete frendship. thenne sire Tristram wold make no lenger delayes but lasshed at sir Lamorak, & thus they foughte longe, tyl eyder were wery of other. Thenne sir Tristram seid to sir Lamorak in alle my lyf mette I neuer with suche a knyght

that was soo bygge and well brethed as ye be, therfore said syre Tristram hit were pyte, that ony of vs both shold here be meschyeued. Syr said sire Lamorak for youre renomme and name I wille that ye haue the worship of this battaile, and therfor I will yelde me vnto you. And ther with he took the poynte of his swerd to yelde hym. Nay said sir Tristram ye shalle not doo soo, for wel I knowe your profers and more of your gentylnesse than for ony fere or drede ye haue of me. And there with alle sir Tristram profered hym his swerde and said sire Lamorak as an ouercomen knyghte I yelde me vnto you, as to a mā of the most noble prowesse that euer I mette with alle. Nay said sir Lamorak I wille doo you gentylnesse. I requyre yow lete vs be sworne to gyders that neuer none of vs shalle after this day haue adoo with other, and there with alle syre Tristram and sire Lamorak sware that neuer none of hem shold fyghte ageynst other nor for wele, nor for woo.

Capitulum xii.

And this meane whyle there came sire Palomydes the good knyght folowynge the questynge beest that hadde in shap a hede lyke a serpents hede, and a body lyke a lybard, buttocks lyke a lyon, and foted lyke an herte, and in his body there was suche a noyse as hit had ben the noyse of thyrtty coupel of houdes questyng, and suche a noyse that beest made where someuer he wente, & this beest euermore syr palomydes folowed, for hit was called his quest, & ryzt so as he folowed this beest it came by syr Tristram, and soone after cam Palamydes. and to breue this matere, he smote doune sir tristram and sir Lamorak bothe with one spere, and soo he departed after the beste Glatysaunt, that was called the questynge beest, wherfore these two knyghtes were passynge wrothe, that sir Palomydes wold not fyghte on foote with hem.

Here men may vnderstande, that ben of worship that he was neuer fourmed that alle tymes myght stande, but somtyme he was putte to the werse by male fortune. And at somme tyme the wers knyghte putte the better knyghte to a rebuke. Thenne sire Tristram

and sire Lamorak gate sire kehydius vpon a sheld betwixe them bothe, and ledde hym to a fosters lodge, & there they gaf hym in charge to kepe hym well, and with hym they abode thre dayes.

Thenne the two knyghtes toke their horses, and at the crosse they departed. And thenne said sir Tristram to sire Lamorak I requyre you yf ye happe to mete wyth sir Palamydes, say hym that he shal fynde me atte same Welle there I mette hym, and there I sire Tristram shalle preue whether he be better knyght than I. and soo eyther departed from other a sondry way, and sire tristram rode nyghe there as was sire kehydius, and sire Lamorak rode vntyl he came to a chappel, and there he putte his hors vnto pasture, and anone there came sir Melyagaunce that was kynge Bagdemagus sone, & he there putte his hors to pasture, and was not ware of sir lamorak, and thenne this knyght sire Melliagaunce maade his mone of the loue that he hadde to quene Gueneuer, and there he made a woful complaynte. All this herd sire Lamorak, and on the morne sir lamorak took his hors and rode vnto the forest, and there he mette with two knyghtes houynge vnder the wood shawe. Faire knyghtes said sire Lamorak what doo ye houynge here and watchynge. And yf ye be knyghtes arraunt that wille juste, loo I am redy. Nay sir knyght they said, not soo, we abyde not here for to juste with you, but we lye here in awayte of a Knyghte that slewe our broder.

What knyght was that said sir Lamorak that ye wold fayne mete with all. Syre they said, hit is sire launcelot that slewe oure broder. And yf euer we maye mete with hym, he shal not escape but we shalle slee hym. Ye take vpon you a grete charge saide sire Lamorak, for sire launcelot is a noble proued knyzt. As for that we doute not, for there nys none of vs but we are good ynough for hym. I will not bileue that said sir Lamorak. For I herd neuer yet of no knyght the dayes of my lyf but sir launcelot was to bygge for hym.

Capitulum xiii.

Ryght soo as they stode talkynge thus, syre Lamorak was ware hou syr launcelot came rydynge streyghte toward them, thenne sire Lamorak salewed hym, and he hym ageyne. And thenne sire lamorak asked sir launcelot, yf there were ony thynge that he myght doo for hym in these marches. Nay said sire launcelot not at this tyme. I thanke you. thenne eyther departed from other, and sir Lamorak rode ageyn ther as he lefte the two knyghtes, and thenne he fond them hydde in the leued woode. Fy on you said sir Lamorak fals cowardes, pyte and shame it is, that ony of you shold take the hyhe ordre of knyghthode. Soo sir Lamorak departed fro them, and within a whyle he mette with sire Melyagaunce. And thenne syre Lamorak asked hym, why he loued Quene Gueneuer as he dyd, for I was not fer from you whanne ye made your complaynte by the chappell. Dyd ye soo said sir Melyagaũce, thenne wille I abyde by hit, I loue quene gueneuer what wille ye with hit, I wille preue and make good, that she is the fayrest lady and moost of beaute in the world. As to that said sire Lamorak I say nay therto, for quene Morgause of Orkeney moder to sire Gawayne and his moder is the fayrest quene and lady that bereth the lyf. That is not so sayd syre Melyagaunce, and that wille I preue with my handes vpon thy body. Wille ye soo said sire Lamorak, and in a better quarel kepe I not to fyghte. Thenne they departed eyther from other in grete wrathe. And thenne they came rydyng to gyder as hit had ben thonder, and eyther smote other so sore that their horses felle bakward to the erthe. And thenne they auoyded their horses and dressid their sheldes, and drewe their swerdes. And thenne they hurtled to gyders as wylde bores, and thus they fought a grete whyle. For Melyagaunce was a good man and of grete myght, but sire Lamorak was hard bygge for hym, and putte hym alweyes a bak, but eyther had wounded other sore. And as they stode thus fyghtynge, by fortune came sire Launcelot and sire Bleoberys rydynge. And thenne sire launcelot

rode betwixe them, and asked them, For what cause they fought soo to gyders, and ye are bothe knyghtes of kynge Arthur.

Capitulum xiiii.

Syr said Melyagaunce I shalle telle you for what cause we doo this battaille. I praysed my lady Quene Gueneuer, and said she was the fayrest lady of the world, and sire Lamorak said nay therto. For he said quene Morgause of Orkeney was fayrer than she and more of beaute. A syre Lamorak why saist thou soo, hit is not thy parte to disprayse thy pryncesse that thou arte vnder theire obeyssaunce and we alle, and there with he alyghte on foote, and sayd for this quarel make the redy. For I wille preue vpon the, that Quene Gueneuer is the fayrest lady and moost of bounte in the world. Syre said sire Lamorak I am loth to haue adoo with you in this quarell. For euery man thynketh his owne lady fayrest, and though I prayse the lady, that I loue moost, ye shold not be wrothe, For though my lady quene Gueneuer be fayrest in your eye, wete ye wel Quene Morgause of Orkeney is fayrest in myn eye, and soo euery knyght thynketh his owne lady fayrest, and wete ye wel syr ye are the man in the world excepte sire Tristram, that I am moost lothest to haue adoo with alle. But and ye wille nedes fyghte with me I shal endure you as longe as I may. Thenne spake sire Bleoberys, and said, my lord sire Laūcelot, I wyste you neuer soo mysauysed as ye are now. For syre Lamorak saith you but reason and knyghtely. For I warne you I haue a lady, and me thynketh that she is the fayrest lady of the world. Were this a grete reason that ye shold be wrothe with me for suche langage. And wel ye wote, that syr Lamorak is as noble a knyght as I knowe, and he hath oughte you and vs euer good wille, and therfore I praye you be good frendes. Thenne sire Launcelot sayd vnto sir lamerak, I pray you foryeue me myn euylle wylle, And yf I was mysauysed I wille amende hit. Syre sayde sir Lamorak the amendys is soone made betwixe you and me. And soo sir Launcelot and sire Bleoberys departed, and syr Melyagaunce and sir Lamorak took their horses, and eyther departed from other. And within a

whyle came kynge Arthur and mette with sir Lamorak and justed with hym, and there he smote doune sire Lamorak, and wounded hym sore with a spere, and soo he rode from hym, wherfore sir Lamorak was wrothe that he wold not fyghte with hym on foote, hou be it that sire Lamorak knewe not kynge Arthur.

Capitulum xv.

Now leue we of this tale, and speke we of sire Tristram, that as he rode he mette with sir kay the seneschal and there sire kay asked sir Tristram of what coũtrey he was, he ansuerd that he was of the countrey of Cornewail. Hit maye wel be said sir kay, for yet herd I neuer that euer good knyghte came oute of Cornewaile. that is euyl spoken said sir Tristram, but and it please you to telle me your name I requyre you. Syre wete ye wel said sire kay that my name is sire kay the seneschal. Is that your name said sir Tristram, now wete ye well that ye are named the shamefullest knyghte of youre tonge that now is lyuynge, how be it ye are called a good knyght, but ye are called vnfortunate, and passyng ouerthwarte of your tonge. And thus they rode to gyders tyl they came to a brydge. And there was a knyghte wold not lete hem passe, tyl one of hem justed with hym, and so that knyzt justed with sir kay, and there that knyght gaf sir kay a falle, his name was sire Tor syre Lamoraks half broder, and thenne they two rode to theyre lodgynge. And there they fonde sire Brandyles, and sir Tor came thyder anone after.

And as they satte atte souper these foure knyghtes, thre of them spak alle shame by Cornysshe knyghtes. Syr Tristram herd alle that they saide, and he sayd but lytell, but he thoughte the more, but at that tyme he discouerd not his name. Vpon the morne sir Tristram took his hors, and abode them vpon their way. And there syre Brandyles proferd to juste with sir Tristram, and sir Tristram smote hym doune hors and alle to the erthe. Thenne sire Tor le fyse de vayshoure encountred with syre Tristram, and there sire Tristram smote hym doune, and thenne he rode his waye, and sir kay folowed hym, but he wold not of his felaushiip. Thenne

sire Brandyles came to sir kay, and said I wold wete fayne what is that knyghtes name. Come on with me said sir kay, and we shall praye hym to telle vs his name. Soo they rode to gyders, tylle they came nyghe hym, and thenne they were ware where he sat by a Welle, and had putte of his helme to drynke at the Welle. And whanne he sawe them come, he laced on his helme lyghtly, and took his hors, and proferd hem to juste. Nay said syre Brandyles we justed late ynough with you, we come not in that entent. But for this we come to requyre you of knyghthode to telle vs your name. My fayre knyghtes sythen that is your desyre, and to please you ye shal wete that my name is sir Trystram de lyones neuewe vnto kynge Mark of Cornewayle. In good tyme saide sire Brandyles, and wel be ye fonden, and wete ye wel that we be ryght gladde that we haue fonde you, and we be of a felauship that wold be ryzt glad of your company. For ye are the knyghte in the world that the noble felauship of the round table mooste desyreth to haue the company of. God thanke them said sir Tristram of theyre grete goodenes, but as yet I feale wel that I am vnabyl to be of their felauship. For I was neuer yet of suche dedes of worthynes to be in the company of suche a felauship. A sayde sire kay and ye be syre Tristram de lyones ye are the man called now moost of prowesse excepte sir launcelot du lake. For he bereth not the lyf crysten ne hethen that can fynde suche another knyght to speke of his prowesse and of his handes and his trouthe with alle. For yet coude there neuer creature saye of hym dishonour and make hit good. Thus they talked a grete whyle, and thenne they departed eyther from other suche weyes as hem semed best.

Capitulum xvi.

Now shall ye here what was the cause that kynge Arthur cam in to the forest perillous, that was in North Walys by the meanes of a lady, her name was Annowre, and this lady came to kynge Arthur at Cardyf, and she by fayre promyse and fayre bihestes maade kynge Arthur to ryde with her in to that forest perillous, and she was a grete sorceresse, and many dayes she hadde loued kynge arthur, and

by cause she wold haue hym to lye by her, she came in to that Countrey. Soo whanne the kynge was gone with her, many of his knyghtes folowed after kynge arthur, whan they myst hym, as sir launcelot, Braundyles and many other. and when she had brought hym to her toure, she desyred hym to lye by her, and thenne the kynge remembryd hym of his lady, and wold not lye by her for no crafte that she coude doo. Thenne euery daye she wolde make hym ryde in to that forest with his owne knyghtes to the entent to haue had kynge arthur slayne. For whan this lady annoure sawe that she myzt not haue hym at her wille, thenne she laboured by fals meanes to haue destroyed kynge arthur and slayne. Thenne the lady of the lake that was alwey frendely to kynge arthur, she vnderstoode by her subtyl craftes that kynge arthur was lyke to be destroyed. And therfore this lady of the lake that hyght Nyneue cam in to that forest to seke after sire Launcelot du lake, or sire Tristram for to helpe kynge arthur, for as that same day this lady of the lake knewe wel that kynge arthur shold be slayne, onles that he hadde helpe of one of these two knyztes, and thus she rode vp and doune tyl she mette with sire Tristram, and anone as she sawe hym, she knewe hym. O my lord sir Tristram she said well be ye mette, and blessid be the tyme that I haue mette with you, for this same day, and within these two houres shalle be done the foulest dede that euer was done in this land. O fair damoysel said sir Tristram maye I amende hit. Come on with me she said and that in alle the haste ye maye, for ye shal see the most worshipfullest knyzt of the world hard bestad. Thenne said sire Tristram I am redy to helpe suche a noble man, he is neither better ne wers said the lady of the lake but the noble kynge Arthur hym self. God defende said sir Trystram that euer he shold be in suche distresse. Thenne they rode to gyders a grete pas vntyl they came to a lytel turret or castel, and vndernethe that castel they sawe a knyghte standynge vpon foote fyghtynge with two knyghtes. And soo sir Tristram biheld them, and at the laste the two knyghtes smote doune the one knyghte, and that one of hem vnlaced his helme to haue slayne hym. And the lady Annoure gat kyng Arthurs suerd in her hand to haue stryken of his hede. And there with alle came sire Tristram with alle his myghte, cryenge, Traytresse, Traytresse leue

that, And anone there sire Tristram smote the one of the knyghtes thorou the body that he felle dede, and thēne he rasshed to the other, and smote his bak in sonder, and in the meane whyle the lady of the lake cryed to kyng Arthur lete not that fals lady escape. Thenne kynge Arthur ouertoke her, and with the same swerd he smote of her heed, and the lady of the lake took vp her heed and henge hit vp by the heyre of her sadel bowe. And thenne sir Tristram horsed kyng Arthur, and rode forth with hym, but he charged the lady of the lake not to discouer his name as at that tyme. Whan the kyng was horsed, he thanked hertely sire Tristram, and desyred to wete his name, but he wold not telle hym, but that he was a poure knyght auenturous, and soo he bare kynge Arthur felauship tyl he met with somme of his knyghtes. And within a whyle he mette with sir Ector de marys, and he knewe not kynge Arthur nor sir Tristram, and he desyred to juste with one of hem. Thenne sire Tristram rode vnto sir Ector, and smote hym from his hors. And whanne he hadde done soo, he cam ageyne to the kynge, and said my lord yonder is one of your knyghtes, he may bere you felauship, and another day that dede that I haue done for you I truste to god ye shalle vnderstande that I wold do you seruyse. Allas said kyng Arthur lete me wete what ye are. Not at this tyme said sir Tristram. Soo he departed and lefte kynge Arthur and sir Ector to gyders.

Capitulum xvii.

And thenne at a day sette sire Tristram and sire Lamorak mette at the Welle, and thenne they took kehydius at the fosters hous, and soo they rode with hym to the ship, where they lefte dame Brangwayne and Gouernayle and soo they sayled in to Cornewaile all holy to gyders, and by assent and enformacyon of dame Brangwayn whan they were landed they rode vnto sire Dynas the seneschal, a trusty frende of sir Tristrams, and so dame Brangwayne and syre Dynas rode to the courte of kynge Marke, and told the quene la Beale Isoud that sir tristram was nyghe her in that countrey, thenne for very pure joye la beale Isoud swouned, & whan she myghte

speke, she said gentyl knyzt Seneschall help that I myght speke with hym, outher my herte wille brast.

Thenne sir Dynas and dame Brangwayne broughte syre tristram and kehydius pryuely vnto the courte vnto a chamber where as la beale Isoud hadde assygned hit, and to telle the ioyes that were betwixe la beale Isoud and sire tristram, there is no tonge can telle it, nor herte thynke hit, nor pen wryte hit. And as the Frensshe book maketh mencyon at the fyrst tyme that euer sir kehydius sawe la beale Isoud, he was soo enamoured vpon her, that for very pure loue he myghte neuer withdrawe hit. And at the last as ye shall here or the book be ended, sire Kehydius dyed for the loue of la beale Isoud, and thenne pryuely he wrote vnto her letters and ballades of the moost goodlyest that were vsed in tho dayes. And whanne La beale Isoud vnderstood his letters she hadde pyte of his cōplaynt, and vnauysed she wrote another letter to comforte hym with alle. And sire tristram was alle this whyle in a turret and the commaundement of la beale Isoud, and whan she myght, she came vnto sire tristram. So on a day kynge Mark played at the chesse vnder a chamber wyndowe, and at that tyme sire tristram and sire Kehydius were within the chamber ouer Kyng Marke, and as it myshapped sir tristram fonde the letter that Kehydius sent vnto la beale Isoud, also he had foūd the letter that she wrote vnto Kehydius, & at that same tyme la Beale Isoud was in the same chamber. Thenne sir Tristram came vnto la Beale Isoud and said, Madame here is a letter that was sente vnto you, and here is the letter that ye sent vnto hym that sente you that letter. Allas madame the good loue that I have loued you, and many landes and rychesse have I forsaken for your loue, and now ye are a traytresse to me the whiche dothe me grete payne, but as for the sir kehydius I broughte the oute of Bretayne in to this Coūtrey, and thy fader kynge Howel I wanne his landes, how be it I wedded thy syster Isoud la blaunche maynys for the goodenes she dyd vnto me. And yet as I am true knyghte she is a clene mayden for me, but wete thou wel syr Kehydius for this falshede and treason thou hast done me, I wille reuenge hit vpon the. And there with alle sir Tristram drewe oute his swerd, and said sire kehydius kepe the, and thenne la Beale Isoud swouned to the erthe. And whanne sire kehy-

dius sawe sir tristram come vpon hym, he sawe none other bote, but lepte oute at a bay wyndowe euen ouer the hede where sat kynge Marke playenge at the chesses. And whanne the kynge sawe one come hurlynge ouer his hede, he sayd, Felawe what arte thou, and what is the cause thou lepest oute at that wyndowe. My lord the kynge said Kehydius, hit fortuned me that I was a slepe in the wyndowe aboue your hede, and as I slepte I slommeryd, and soo I felle doune. And thus sir kehydius excused hym.

Capitulum xiii. (xviii.)

THENNE sir Tristram dredde sore lest he were discouerd vnto the kynge that he was there, wherfore he drewe hym to the strengthe of the Toure, and armed hym in suche armour as he had for to fyghte with hem that wold withstande hym. And soo whanne sire Tristram sawe there was no resystence ageynst hym, he sente Gouernaile for his hors and his spere, and knyghtely he rode forth oute of the castel openly that was called the castel of Tyntagil. And euen atte gate he mette with Gyngalyn sir Gawayns sone. And anone sir Gyngalyn putte his spere in his reyste, and ranne vpon sire Trystram and brake his spere, and sire Tristram at that tyme had but a swerd, and gaf hym suche a buffet vpon the helme that he fylle doune from his sadel, and his swerd slode adoune, and carf a sonder his hors neck. And so sire tristram rode his waye in to the forest, and alle this doynge sawe kyng Mark. And thenne he sente a squyer vnto the hurte knyghte and commaunded hym to come to hym, and soo he dyd. And whanne kynge Marke wyst that it was sir Gyngalyn, he welcomed hym, and gaf hym an hors, and asked hym what knyght hit was that had encoũtred with hym. Syr said gyngalyn, I wote not what knyzt he was, but wel I wote that he sygheth and maketh grete dole. Thenne sir Tristram within a whyle mette with a knyght of his owne that hyghte sir Fergus. And whan he had mette with hym he made grete sorowe in so moche that he felle doune of his hors in a swoune, and in suche sorowe he was in thre dayes and thre nyghtes. Thenne at the laste sir Tristram sent vnto the courte by sir Fergus

for to spere what tydynges. And so as he rode by the way he met with a damoysel that came from sir Palamydes to knowe and seke how sir Tristram dyd. Thenne sir Fergus told her, how he was al most out of his mynde. Allas said the damoysel where shalle I fynde hym. In suche a place said sire Fergus. Thenne sir Fergus fond Quene Isoud seke in her bedde, makynge the grettest dole that euer ony erthely woman made. And whan the damoysel fonde sire Tristram, she made grete dole by cause she myzt not amende hym, for the more she made of hym, the more was his payne. And at the last sir Tristram toke his hors and rode aweye from her. And thenne was it thre dayes or that she coude fynde hym. And thenne she broughte hym mete and drynke, but he wold none, and thenne another tyme sir Tristram escaped awey from the damoysel, and it happed hym to ryde by the same castel where sire Palamydes and sir Tristram dyd bataille whan la beale Isoud departed them. And there by fortune the damoysel mette with sire Tristram ageyne makynge the grettest dole that euer erthely creature made, and she yede to the lady of that castel, and tolde her of the mysauenture of sire Tristram. allas said the lady of that castel, where is my lord sir Tristram. Ryght here by your castel said the damoysel. In good tyme saide the lady, is he soo nyghe me, he shalle haue mete and drynke of the best, and an harp I haue of his, where vpon he taught me. For of goodely harpynge he bereth the pryce in the world. So this lady and damoisel brought hym mete and drynke, but he ete lytel therof. Thenne vpon a nyght he putte his hors from hym. And thenne he vnlaced his armour, and thenne sir Tristram wold go in to the wildernesse and brast doune the trees and bowes, and other whyle whan he fond the harp that the lady sente hym, thenne wold he harpe and playe therupon, and wepe to gyders, and somtyme whan sire Tristram was in the woode that the lady wyst not where he was, thenne wold she sytte her doune and playe vpon that harp. Thenne wold sire Tristram come to that harp, and herken ther to, and somtyme he wold harp hym self. Thus he there endured a quarter of a yeare, thēne at the last he ranne his way, and she wiste not where he was become. And thenne was he naked and waxed lene, and poure of flesshe, and soo he felle in the felaushiṗ of herd men and sheepherdes,

and dayly they wold gyue hym somme of their mete & drynke. And whan he dyd ony shrewd dede, they wold bete hym with roddes, and soo they clypped hym with sheres and made hym lyke a foole.

Capitulum xix.

And vpon a day Dagonet kynge Arthurs foole came in to Cornewaile with two squyers with hym, and as they rode thorugh that forest, they came by a fayre welle, where sir Tristram was wonte to be, and the whether was hote, and they alyghte to drynke of that welle, and in the meane whyle their horses brake lous. Ryght soo sire Tristram came vnto them, and fyrst he sousyd sire Dagonet in that welle, & after his squyers, and there at lough the sheepherds, and forth with al he ranne after their horses and broughte hem ageyne, one by one, and ryghte soo wete as they were, he made hem lepe vp, and ryde their wayes. Thus sire Tristram endured there an halfe yere naked, and wold neuer come in town, ne vyllage. The meane whyle the damoysel that syre Palomydes sente to seke sir Tristram she yede vnto sir Palomydes, and told hym alle the meschyef that sir Tristram endured. Allas sayd sir Palomydes hit is grete pyte that euer soo noble a Knyght shold be soo mescheued for the loue of a lady. But neuertheles, I wille goo and seke hym, and comforte hym and I may. Thenne a lytel before that tyme la Beale Isoud had commaunded sir Kehydius oute of the Countrey of Cornewaile. Soo sir Kehydius departed with a dolorous herte, and by aduenture he mette with sir Palamydes, and they enfelaushypped to gyder, and eyther complayned to other of theire hote loue that they loued la beale Isoud. Now lete vs said sir Palomydes seke sire tristram that loued her as wel as we, and lete vs preue whether we maye recouer hym. Soo they rode in to that forest, and thre dayes and thre nyghtes they wold neuer take their lodgynge but euer soughte sir tristram. And vpon a tyme by aduenture they mette with Kynge Mark that was ryden from hys men al alone. Whanne they sawe hym, syre palomydes knewe hym, but sir Kehydius knewe hym not. A fals kynge said sir Palomydes, it is pyte thou hast thy lyf. For thou arte a

destroyer of alle worshpful Knyghtes, and by thy meschyef and thy vengeaunce thou hast destroyed that mooste noble Knyght sire tristram de lyones. And therfor defende the said sir Palomydes, for thou shalt dye this day. that were shame said Kyng Mark, for ye two are armed and I am vnarmed. As for that said sir Palomydes I shalle fynde a remedy therfore, here is a Knyzt with me, and thou shalt haue his harneis. Nay said kyng Mark I wille not haue adoo with yow for cause haue ye none to me. For alle the mysease that sir tristram hath, was for a letter that he fond, for as to me I dyd to hym no displeasyre, and god knoweth I am ful sory for his disease and malady. Soo when the kyng had thus excused hym, they were frendes, and kyng Mark wold haue had them vnto tyntagil, but syr Palomydes wolde not but torned vnto the Realme of Logrys, and sir kehydius saide that he wolde goo in to Bretayn.

Now torne we vnto sir Dagonet ayene that whanne he and his squyers were vpon horsbak, he demyd that the sheepherdes had sente that foole to araye hem so, by cause that they laughed at hem, and soo they rode vnto the kepers of beestes and alle to bete them. Syr tristram sawe them bete that were wonte to gyue hym mete and drynke, thenne he ran thyder, and gat sir Dagonet by the hede, and gaf hym suche a falle to the erthe, that he brysed hym sore so that he lay stylle. And thenne he wrast his swerd oute of his hand. And ther with he ranne to one of his squyers, and smote of his hede, & the other fled. And soo sir Tristram took his waye with that swerd in his hand rennynge as he hadde ben wylde woode. Thenne sir Dagonet rode to kyng Mark and told hym hou he had spedde in that forest. And therfore said sir Dagonet, Beware kynge Mark that thou come not aboute that welle, in the forest. For there is a foole naked, and that foole and I foole mette to gyders, and he hadde almost slayn me. A said kynge Mark, that is sir Matto le breune, that felle oute of his wytte by cause he lost his lady. For whan sir Gaherys smote doune sir Matto and wanne his lady of hym, Neuer syns was he in his mynde, and that was pyte, for he was a good knyght.

Capitulum xx.

THENNE sir Andred that was cosyn vnto sir Tristram, made a lady that was his peramour to say and to noyse hit that she was with sire Tristram or euer he dyed. And this tale she broughte vnto kynge markes courte that she buryed hym by a welle, and that or he dyed, he besoughte kynge Marke to make his cosyn sir Andred kynge of the countre of Lyonas, of the whiche sir Trystram was lord of. Alle this dyd sir Andred by cause he wold haue had sire tristrams lādes. And whanne kynge Mark herd telle, that sir tristram was dede, he wepte, and made grete dole. But whanne quene Isoud herd of these tydynges, she maade suche sorowe, that she was nyghe oute of her mynde. And soo vpon a daye she thought to slee her self, and neuer to lyue after sir tristrams deth. And soo vpon a day la beale Isoud-gat a swerd pryuely, and bare hit in to her gardyn, and there she pyghte the swerd thorugh a plumme tree vp to the hyltes, soo that hit stak fast and hit stode brest hyhe. And as she wold haue ronne vpon the swerd and to haue slayne her self. Alle this aspyed kyng Marke, how she kneled doune and saide, swete lord Jhesu haue mercy vpon me, for I maye not lyue after the dethe of syr Tristram de lyones, for he was my fyrst loue, and he shalle be the last, and with these wordes came Kyng mark and took her in his armes, and thenne he took vp the swerd, and bare her away with hym in to a Toure, and there he made her to be kept and watched her surely, and after that she lay longe seke nyz at the poynte of dethe. This meane whyle ranne sir Tristram naked in the forest with the swerd in his hand, and soo he cam to an hermytage, and there he leid hym doun and slepte, and in the meane whyle the heremyte stale aweye his swerd, and leid mete doune by hym. Thus was he kepte there a ten dayes. And at the last he departed and came to the herd men ageyne. And there was a gyaunt in that countre that hyght Tawleas. And for fere of sir Tristram more than seuen yere he durst neuer moche goo at large, but for the moost party he kepte hym in a sure castel of his owne, and soo this Tauleas herd telle, that sir Tristram was dede by the noyse of the courte of kynge Marke. Thenne this Tauleas

wente dayly at large. And soo he happed vpon a daye he came to the herd men wandryng and langerynge. And there he sette hym doune to reste among them. The meane whyle ther cam a knyght of Cornewaile that ledde a lady with hym, and his name was sir Dynaunt, & whanne the gyaunt sawe hym, he wente from the herd men and hydde hym vnder a tree, and soo the knyght came to that welle, and there he alyghte to repose hym. And as soone as he was from his hors, this gyaunt Tauleas came betwixe this knyght and his hors, and toke the hors and lepte vpon hym. So forth with he rode vnto sir Dynaunt, and took hym by the coller, & pulled hym afore hym vpon his hors, and there wolde haue stryken of his hede. Thenne the herd men said vnto sire Tristram, helpe yonder knyght, helpe ye hym seid sir tristram. We dare not said the herd men. Thenne sir tristram was ware of the swerd of the knyght there as hit lay, and soo thyder he ranne, and took vp the swerd and stroke of sir tauleas hede, and so he yede his way to the herd men.

Capitulum xxi.

THENNE the knyght took vp the gyaunts hede, and bare hit with hym vnto kynge Marke, and told hym, what aduenture betyd hym in the forest, and how a naked man rescowed hym, from the grymly gyaunt Tauleas. Where hadde ye this aduenture said kynge Marke. forsothe said syr Dynaunt at the fayre fontayne in your foreste, where many aduenturous knyztes mete, and there is the madde man. Wel said kyng Mark I wille see that wild man. So within a day or two kynge Marke commaunded his knyghtes, & his hunters that they shold by redy on the morne for to hunte, and soo vpon the morne he wente vnto that forest: And whanne the kynge came to that welle, he fonde there lyenge by that well a fayr naked man, and a swerd by hym. Thenne kyng Mark blewe and straked, and there with his knyghtes came to hym, and thenne the kynge commaunded his knyghtes to take that naked man with fayrenes, and brynge hym to my castel. Soo they did saufly & fayre and cast mantels vpon sir Tristram and soo ledde hym vnto Tyntagyll, and there they bathed

hym and wasshed hym and gaf hym hote suppynges til they had brought hym wel to his remembraunce, but alle this whyle there was no creature that knewe sir Tristram nor what man he was. Soo hit felle vpon a daye that the quene la beale Isoud herd of suche a man, that ranne naked in the foreste, and how the kynge had brought hym home to the Courte. Thenne la Beale Isoud called vnto her dame Brangwayne and said come on with me. For we wille goo see this man that my lord brought from the forest the last daye. So they passed forthe, and spered where was the seke man. And thenne a squyer told the quene that he was in the gardyn, takynge his rest, and repose hym ageynst the sonne. Soo whan the quene loked vpon sir Tristram she was not remembryd of hym, but euer she heid vnto dame Brangwayne. me semeth I shold haue sene hym here to fore in many places, but as soone as sir Tristram sawe her, he knewe her wel ynough. And thenne he torned awey his vysage, and wepte. Thenne the quene hadde alweyes a lytel brachet with her that sir Tristram gaf her the fyrst tyme that euer she came in to Cornewaile, & neuer wold that brachet departe from her, but yf syre Tristram was nyghe there as was la Beale Isoud, and this brachet was sente from the kynges doughter of Fraunce vnto syre Tristram for grete loue, and anone as this lytel brachet felte a saueour of syr Tristram she lepte vpon hym and lycked his learys and his erys, and thēne she whyned and quested and she smelled at his feet and at his handes, and on all partyes of his body that she myghte come to. A my lady sayd dame Brangwayn vnto la beale Isoud, Allas allas said she I see it is myn own lord syr Tristram. And therupon Isoud felle doune in a swoune and soo laye a grete whyle. And whan she myght speke she said, my lord sir Tristram blessid be god ye haue your lyf, and now I am sure ye shalle be discouerd by this lytel brachet, for she wille neuer leue you. And also I am sure as soone as my lord kynge Mark doo knowe you, he wil bannyssh you oute of the countrey of Cornewaile, or els he will destroye you. For goddes sake myn owne lord, graunte kynge Marke his wille, and thenne drawe you vnto the Courte of kyng arthur, for there are ye byloued, and euer whan I maye I shalle sende vnto you. And whan ye lyst ye may come to me, and at alle tymes erly and late I wille be at your commaundement, to lyue as poure a lyf as euer dyd

quene or lady. O madame said sir Tristram goo from me, for mykel anger and daunger haue I escaped for your loue.

Capitulum xxii.

THENNE the quene departed, but the brachet wold not from hym, and there with alle came kynge Marke and the brachet sat vpon hym, and bayed at them all. There with al syr Andred spak and said syr this is sir Tristram I see by the brachet. Nay said the kyng I can not suppose that. Thenne the kyng asked hym vpon his feith what he was, and what was his name. So god me help said he, my name is sir Tristram de lyones, now do by me what ye lyst. A saide kyng Mark me repenteth of your recouer, & thenne he lete calle his barons to juge sir Tristram to the dethe. thēne many of his barons wold not assente therto, and in especyal syr Dynas the seneschal, & sir Fergus. And so by thaduyse of them al sir Tristram was banysshed out of the coūtrey for x yere, & therupon he took his oth vpon a book before the kyng & his barons. And soo he was made to departe oute of the Countrey of Cornewaile, and there were many barons brought hym vnto his shyp, of the whiche somme were his frendes, & somme his foes. And in the meane whyle there came a knyghte of kynge Arthurs, his name was Dynadan, and his comyng was for to seke after sir Tristram, thenne they shewed hym where he was armed at alle poyntes goynge to the shyp. Now fayre knyzte said sir Dynadan or ye passe this courte that ye will juste with me, I requyre the. With a good wille said sir Tristram, & these lordes wille gyue me leue. Thenne the Barons graunted therto, and soo they ranne to gyders, and there sire Tristram gaf sire Dynadan a falle. And thenne he praid sir Tristram to gyue hym leue to goo in his felaushyp. ye shalle be ryght welcome said thenne sire Tristram, and soo they took theyr horses and rode to their shyppes to gyders, and whanne sire Tristram was in the see, he said, Grete wel kyng Marke and all myn enemyes, and saye hem I wille come ageyne whan I maye. And wel am I rewarded for the fyghtynge with sire Marhaus, and delyuerd all this countrey from seruage,

and wel am I rewarded for the fetchyng and costes of Quene Isoud oute of Irland, and the daunger that I was in fyrst & last and by the way comynge home what daunger I had to brynge ageyne Quene Isoud from the castel Pluere, and well I am rewarded whanne I foughte with sir Bleoberys for syre Segwarydes wyf, and well am I rewarded whan I fouzt with syre Blamore de ganys for kynge Anguysshe, fader vnto la Beale Isoude. And well am I rewarded whan I smote doune the good knyghte syre Lamorak de galys at Kyng Markes request. And wel am I rewarded whan I fought with the kynge with the honderd knyghtes, and the kynge of Northgalys, and bothe these wold haue put his land in seruage, and by me they were put to a rebuke. and wel am I rewarded for the sleynge of Tauleas the myghty gyaunte and many other dedes haue I done for hym, and now haue I my waryson. And telle Kynge Mark that many noble knyghtes of the table roūd haue spared the barons of this countrey for my sake. Also am I not wel rewarded whan I fought with the good knyght sir Palomydes and rescowed quene Isoud from hym. And at that tyme kynge Marke said afore all his barons I shold haue ben better rewarded, and forth with alle he took the see.

Capitulum xiii. (xxiii.)

And at the next landynge faste by the see, there mette with sir Tristram & with sir Dynadan sir Ector de marys and sir Bors de ganys, and there sir Ector Justed with syr Dynadan, and he smote hym and his hors doun. And thenne sir Tristram wold haue Justed with syre Bors and sir Bors said that he wolde not juste with no Cornysshe knyghtes, for they are not called men of worship, and all this was done vpon a brydge. and with this came sire Bleoberys and syr Dryaunt, and sir Bleoberys profered to Juste with syr Tristram, and there sir Tristram smote doune syr Bleoberys. Thenne said sire Bors de ganys, I wist neuer Cornyssh knyghte of soo grete valoure nor soo valyaunt as that knyzt that bereth the trappours enbroudred with crounes. And thenne sir Tristram and syr Dynadan

departed fro them in to a forest, and there mette them a damoysel that came for the loue of sire launcelot to seke after somme noble knyghtes of kyng Arthurs courte for to rescowe sir launcelot, and soo sir launcelott was ordeyned, for by the treason of quene Morgan le fay to haue slayne sir launcelot, and for that cause she ordeyned thyrtty knyghtes to lye in a wayte for sir launcelot, and this damoysel knewe this treason. And for this cause the damoysel came for to seke noble knyghtes to helpe syr Launcelot. For that nyght or the day after syr launcelot shold come where these xxx knyghtes were. And soo this damoysel mette with syre Bors and sire Ector and with sir Dryaunt, and there she told hem alle four of the treason of Morgan le fay, and thenne they promysed her that they wold be nyghe where sire launcelot shold mete with the xxx knyztes, & yf soo be they set vpon hym, we wil do rescowes as we can. so the damoysel departed, and by aduenture the damoisel met with sir tristram & with sir Dynadan, & there the damoysel told hem al the treason that was ordeyned for sir launcelot. Fair damoysel said sir tristram bryng me to that same place where they shold mete with sir launcelot. Thenne said sir Dynadan what will ye do, hit is not for vs to fyghte with thyrtty knyghtes, and wete you wel I wylle not therof, as to matche one knyght two or thre is ynough and they be men. But for to matche xv knyghtes that wille I neuer vndertake. fy for shame said sire Tristram, doo but youre parte. Nay said sir Dynadan I will not therof, but yf ye wil lene me your sheld, for ye bere a sheld of Cornewaile, and for the cowardyse that is named to the knyztes of Cornewaile by your sheldes ye be euer forborne. Nay said syr Tristram I will not departe from my sheld for her sake that gaf it me. But one thyng said sir Tristram I promyse the syr Dynadan, but yf thou wilt promyse me to abyde with me, here I shalle slee thee. For I desyre no more of the, but ansuer one knyghte. And yf thy herte wille not serue the, stande by and loke vpon me and them. Syre said syre Dynadan I promyse you to loke vpon & to doo what I may to saue my self, but I wold I had not mette with you. Soo thenne anone these thyrtty knyghtes cam fast by these four knyghtes, and they were ware of them, and eyther of other. And soo these thyrtty knyghtes lete for thys cause that they wold not wrathe

them yf caas be that they had adoo with syr launcelot, and the four knyghtes lete them passe to this entent that they wold see and beholde what they wold doo with syr launcelot. and soo the thyrtty knyghtes paste on, and came by sir Tristram and by sir Dynadan, and thenne sir Tristram cryed on hyghe, loo here is a knyght ageynste you for the loue of sire launcelot. and there he slewe two with one spere and ten with his swerd. And thenne came in syre Dynadan and he dyd passynge wel, and soo of the thyrtty knyghtes there wente but ten awey, and they fledde. Al this bataille sawe sir Bors de ganys and his thre felawes, and thenne they sawe wel hit was the same knyghte that justed with hem at the brydge, thenne they took their horses and rode vnto syr Tristram and praysed hym and thanked hym of his good dedes, and they alle desyred syre Tristram to goo wyth hem to their lodgynge, and he said nay, he wold not go to no lodgynge. Thenne they alle four knyghtes praid hym to telle hem his name. Faire lordes said syr Tristram, as at this tyme I wille not telle you my name.

Capitulum xxiiii.

THĒNE sir Tristram & sir Dynadan rode forth theire weye tyl they came to the sheepherdes & to the herde men, & there they asked hem yf they knewe ony lodgynge or herberough there nyghe hand. Forsothe syrs sayde the herde men here by is good lodgynge in a castel. But there is suche a customme that there shalle no knyghte be herberowed but yf he Juste with two knyghtes, and yf he be but one knyghte, he must juste with two. And as ye be therin soone shalle ye be matched. There is shrewde herberowe said syre Dynadan, lodge where ye will, for I wille not lodge there. Fy for shame sayd sir Tristram are ye not a knyghte of the table round, wherfore ye may not with your worship refuse your lodgynge. Not soo said the herd men, for and ye be beten, and haue the wers ye shalle not be lodged there, and yf ye bete them ye shalle be wel herberowed. A said syr Dynadan they are two sure knyghtes. Thenne sire Dynadan wold not lodge there in no manere, but as sire Tristram

requyred hym of his knyghthode, and so they rode thyder. and to make shorte tale, syr Tristram and sir Dynadan smote hem doune bothe, and soo they entred in to the castel and had good chere, as they coude thynke or deuyse. And whanne they were vnarmed and thought to be mery and in good rest, there came in at the yates syre Palomydes and syre Gaherys requyrynge to haue the customme of the castel. What aray is this said sire Dynadan, I wold haue my rest, that may not be said sir Tristram. Now must we nedes defende the customme of this castel, in soo moche as we haue the better of the lordes of this castel, and therfore saide sire Tristram, nedes muste ye make you redy. In the deuyls name said sir Dynadan came I in to your company, and so they made them redy. And sir Gaherys encountred with sire Tristram, and syr Gaherys had a falle, and sir Palamydes encountred with sir Dynadan, and sir Dynadan had a falle. thenne was hit fall for falle. Soo thenne muste they fyghte on foote. that wold not syr Dynadan, for he was so sore brysed of the falle that syre Palomydes gaf hym. Thenne sir Tristram vnlaced syre Dynadans helme, and praid hym to helpe hym. I wille not sayde syr Dynadan for I am sore wounded of the thyrtty knyghtes that we hadde but late agoo to doo with alle. But ye fare said sire Dynadan vnto syr Tristram as a madde man and as a man y^{t} is oute of his mynde y^{t} wold cast hym selfe awey, and I may curse the tyme that euer I sawe you. For in al the world are not two suche knyghtes that ben so wode as is sire launcelot and ye syr Tristram, for ones I felle in the felaushiip of syr launcelot as I haue done now with you and he set me a werke that a quarter of a yere I kepte my bedde. Jhesu defende me said syr Dynadan from suche two knyghtes, and specially from your felaushiip. Thenne said syre Tristram I will fyghte with hem both. Thenne syr Tristram badde hem come forth both, for I wille fyght with you, thenne syr Palomydes and syr Gaherys dressid them, and smote at hem bothe. thenne Dynadan smote at syr Gaherys a stroke or two, and torned from hym. nay said sir Palomydes, it is to moche shame for vs two knyghtes to fyghte with one. And thenne he dyd byd syr Gaherys stande asyde with that knyght that hath no lyste to fyghte. Thenne they rode to gyders and fought longe, and atte last syr Tristram doubled his strokes, and

drofe syre Palomydes a bak, more than thre strydes. And thenne by one assente syre Gaherys and syr Dynadan wente betwixe them, and departed them in sonder. And thenne by assent of syr Tristram they wold haue lodged to gyders. But syre Dynadan wold not lodge in that castel, And thenne he cursed the tyme that euer he came in their felaushipp, and soo he took his hors, and his harneis, and departed. thenne sir Tristram prayd the lordes of that castel to lene hym a man to brynge hym to a lodgynge, and soo they dyd, and ouertoke sir Dynadan, and rode to their lodgynge two myle thens with a good man in a pryory, and there they were wel at ease. And that same nyght sir Bors and sire Bleoberys and sir Ector and syre Dryaunt abode stylle in the same place there as sire Trystram fouzt with the thyrtty knyghtes, and there they mette with syr Launcelot the same nyght, and had made promyse to lodge with syr Colgreuaunce the same nyght.

Capitulum xxv.

But anone as the noble Knyghte syre launcelot herd of the shelde of Cornewayle thenne wyst he wel that hyt was sire Trystram that fought with his enemyes. And thenne syre Launcelot praysed syre Tristram, and called hym the man of moost worship in the world. Soo there was a knyght in that pryory that hyght Pellinore, and he desyred to wete the name of sire Tristram, but in no wyse he coude not, and so syr Tristram departed and lefte sir Dynadan in the pryory, for he was soo wery and soo sore brysed that he myghte not ryde. Thenne this knyght syre Pellinore said to sire Dynadan, sythen that ye wille not telle me that knyghtes name I will ryde after hym, and make hym to telle me his name, or he shall dye therfore. Beware sir knyght said sir Dynadan, for and ye folowe hym, ye shalle repente hit. Soo that knyghte sire Pellinore rode after sire Tristram and requyred hym of Justes, thēne sir Tristram smote hym doune and wounded hym thoruz the sholder, and soo he past on his way. And on the next day folowyng syr Tristram mette with pursyuaũts, and they told hym that there was made a grete crye of turnement bitwene

kynge Carados of scotland and the kynge of Northwalys, & eyther shold Juste ageyne other at the castel of maydens, and these pursyuaũtes sought alle the coũtrey after the good knyztes, and in especyal kynge Carados lete make sekynge for sir launcelot du lake, and the kyng of North galys lete seke after sir Tristram de lyonas. And at that tyme syr Tristram thought to be at that justes, and soo by aduenture they mette with sire kay the seneschal and syr Sagramor le desyrus, and syr kay requyred sir Tristram to Juste, and sire Tristram in a maner refused hym, by cause he wold not be hurte nor brysed ageynste the grete Justes that shold be bifore the castel of maydens, and therfore he thought to repose hym and to reste hym. And alway sir kay cryed sir knyzt of Cornewaile just with me, or els yelde the to me as recreaunte. Whan sir Tristram herd hym saye soo, he torned to hym, and thenne sire kay refused hym and torned his bak. Thenne syr Tristram said as I fynde the, I shalle take the. Thenne sire Kay torned with euylle wylle, and syre Tristram smote syr kay doune, and soo he rode forthe. Thenne syre Sagramor le desyrus rode after syre Tristram, and maade hym to juste with hym, and there syre Tristram smote doune syre Sagramor le desyrus from his hors and rode his way, and the same day he mette with a damoysel that told hym that he shold wynne grete worship of a knyzt aduenturous that dyd moche harme in alle that countrey.

Whanne sir Tristram herd her say soo, he was gladde to goo with her to wynne worship. So sire Tristram rode with that damoysel a vj myle, and thenne mette hym syre Gawayne, and there with alle syre Gawayne knewe the damoysel, that she was a damoysel of Quene Morgan le fay. Thenne sir Gawayne vnderstode that she ladde that knyght to somme meschyef. Faire knyght said sire Gawayne whyder ryde you now wyth that damoysel. Syr said sire Tristram I wote not whyder I shalle ryde, but as the damoysel wylle lede me. Syr saide syre Gawayne ye shalle not ryde with her, for she and her lady did neuer good but ylle. And thenne sir Gawayne pulled oute his swerd, and said, damoysel, but yf thou telle me anon, for what cause thou ledest this knyzt with the thou shalt dye for hit ryght anone. I knowe alle your ladyes treason, & yours. Mercy syre Gawayne she said, and yf ye wille saue my lyf, I wille telle you.

Saye on said sir Gawayne, and thow shalte haue thy lyf. Syre she said Quene Morgan le fay my lady hath ordeyned a xxx ladyes to seke & aspye after sir laũcelot or sir tristram, & by ye trainys of these ladyes who yt may fyrst mete ony of these two knyghtes they shold torne hem vnto Morgan le fays castel, sayenge that they shold doo dedes of worship, & yf ony of tho two knyztes cam there, there be xxx knyghtes lyenge and watchyng in a toure to wayte vpon sir launcelot or vpon syre tristram. Fy for shame said sire Gawayne that euer suche fals treason shold be wrought or vsed in a quene and a kynges syster, and a kynge and quenes doughter.

Capitulum xxvi.

Syr said sire Gawayne wille ye stande with me, and we wille see the malyce of these thyrtty knyghtes, syr said sir tristram goo ye to hem, and hit please you, and ye shal see I wille not fayle you, for hit is not long ago syn I and a felawe mette with thyrtty knyztes of that quenes felaushiip. And god spede vs soo that we may wynne worship. So thẽne sir Gawayne and sire tristram rode toward the castel where Morgan le fay was, and euer sir Gawayne demed wel that he was sire tristram de lyones by cause he herd that two knyghtes had slayne and beten thyrtty knyghtes. And whanne they came afore the castel sir Gawayn spak on hyghe, and said Quene Morgan le fay sende oute youre knyghtes, that ye haue leyd in a watche for sir laũcelot & for sir tristram. Now said sir Gawayne I knowe your fals treason, and thorou all places where that I ryde men shall knowe of your fals treason, and now lete see sir Gawayn, whether ye dare come out of your castel ye thyrtty knyghtes. thenne the quene spak and al the thyrtty knyghtes attones, and said, sir Gawayne ful wel wetest thou what thou dost and saist. For by god we knowe the passynge wel. But alle that thou spekest, and dost, thow saist hit vpon pryde of that good Knyghte that is there with the. For there be somme of vs that knowen full wel the handes of that knyght ouer alle wel. And wete thou wel sir gawayne, hit is more for his sake than for thyn that we wylle not come oute of this castel. For wete

ye wel sir Gawayne the Knyght that bereth the armes of Cornewaile, we knowe hym, and what he is. thenne sir Gawayne and sir tristram departed and rode on their wayes a day or two to gyders, and there by aduenture they met with syr Kay and syr Sagramor le desyrus. And thenne they were glad of syr gawayne, and he of them, but they wiste not what he was with the shelde of Cornewaile, but by demynge. And thus they rode to gyders a daye or two. And thenne they were ware of syr Breuse saũce pyte chacynge a lady for to haue slayne her, for he had slayn her peramour afore. Hold you all stylle said syr Gawayne & shewe none of you forthe, and ye shalle see me reward yonder fals Knyght, for and he aspye you he is so wel horsed that he wille escape awey. And thenne syre Gawayne rode betwix syr Breuse and the lady, and said fals knyghte leue her, and haue adoo with me. Whan syr Breuse sawe no moo but syre gawayne he feutryd his spere, and syr Gawayne ageynst hym, and there syr Breuse ouerthrewe syr Gawayne, and thenne he rode ouer hym, & ouerthwart hym twenty tymes to haue destroyed hym, and whan sire Tristram sawe hym doo soo vylaynous a dede, he hurled oute ageynste hym. And whan syr Breuse sawe hym with the shelde of Cornewaile, he knewe hym well, that it was syre Tristram, and thenne he fledde, and sir Tristram folowed after hym, and syr Breuse saunce pyte was so horsed that he wente his waye quyte, and sir Tristram folowed hym longe, for he wold fayne haue ben auengyd vpon hym. And soo whanne he hadde longe chaced hym, he sawe a fayre welle, and thyder he rode to repose hym, and teyed his hors til a tree.

Capitulum xxvii.

And thenne he pulled of his helme and wasshed his vysage, and his handes, and soo he felle on slepe. In the meane whyle came a damoysel that had sought sir tristram many wayes and dayes within this land. And whanne she came to the welle she loked vpon hym, & had forgeten hym as in remembraunce of sire Tristram, but by hys hors she knewe hym, that hyghte passe Brewel, that had ben sire Tristrams hors many yeres. For whanne he was mad in the forest,

syr Fergus kepte hym. Soo this lady dame Brangwayne abode stylle tyl he was awake. Soo whanne she sawe hym wake, she salewed hym, and he her ageyn, for eyther knewe other of old acqueyntaunce, thenne she told hym how she had sought hym longe and brode, and there she told hym hou she hadde letters from quene la beale Isoud. Thenne anon sire Tristram redde them, and wete ye well, he was gladde, for theryn was many a pyteous complaynte. Thenne sir Tristram said, lady Brangwayne ye shalle ryde with me tyl that turnement be done at the castel of maydens. And thenne shalle ye bere letters and tydynges with you. And thenne sire tristram took his hors and sought lodgynge, and there he mette wyth a good auncyent knyght and prayd hym to lodge with hym. Ryzt so came Gouernaile vnto sir Tristram, that was glad of that lady. Soo this old knyghtes name was sir Pellownus, and he told of the grete turnement that shold be att the Castel of maydens. And there sir launcelot and xxxii knyztes of his blood had ordeyned sheldes of Cornewaile, and ryzte soo there came one vnto syr Pellounes, and told hym that sir Persydes de bloyse was come home, thenne that knyght helde vp his handes and thanked god of his comynge home, and there sir Pellounes told syr Tristram that in two yeres he had not sene his sone syr Persydes. Syr said sir Tristram I knowe your sone wel ynough for a good knyght, soo on a tyme syr Tristram and syr Persydes came to their lodgynge both at ones, and soo they vnarmed hem, and putte vpon hem their clothynge. And thenne these two knyghtes eche welcomed other. And whanne syr Persydes vnderstode that sir Tristram was of Cornewaile, he said he was ones in Cornewaile, and there I justed afore kynge Marke. And soo it happed me at that tyme, to ouerthrowe ten knyghtes, and thenne came to me syre Tristram de lyones and ouerthrewe me, and took my lady awey from me, and that shalle I neuer forgete, but I shalle remembre me and euer I see my tyme. A said sir trystram now I vnderstande that ye hate syr Tristram. What deme ye, wene ye that sir Tristram is not able to withstande your malyce, yes said sir Persydes I knowe wel that sir Tristram is a noble knyght and a moche better knyght than I, yet shalle I not owe hym my good wille. Ryght as they stode thus talkynge at a bay wyndowe of that castel, they sawe many knyghtes

rydynge to and fro toward the turnement. And thenne was sire Tristram ware of a lykely knyght rydyng vpon a grete black hors, and a black couerd shelde. What knyzte is that said sire Tristram with the black hors & the blak sheld he semeth a good knyzt. I knowe hym wel said sir Persydes he is one of the best knyghtes of the world, thenne is it syre Launcelot said sir Tristram, nay said syre Persydes, hit is syr Palomydes, that is yet vncrystened.

Capitulum xxviii.

THENNE they sawe moche people of the countrey salewe sire Palomydes. And within a whyle after, ther cam a squyer of the castel, that told syre Pellounes that was lord of that castel, that a knyght with a blak sheld had smyten doune thyrten knyztes. Fayr broder said sir Tristram vnto syr Persydes, lete vs caste vpon us clokes, and lete vs goo see the play. Not soo said sir Persydes, we wille not goo lyke knaues thyder, but we wille ryde lyke men and good knyghtes to withstande oure enemyes. Soo they armed them and took their horses and grete speres, and thyder they went there as many knyztes assayed hem self before the turnement. And anone sir Palomydes sawe sir Persydes, and thenne he sente a squyer vnto hym and said, goo thou to the yonder knyght with the grene sheld and therin a lyon of gooldis, and say hym I requyre hym to juste with me, and telle hym that my name is sire Palomydes. Whanne sir Persydes vnderstood that request of syre Palomydes, he made hym redy, and there anone they mette to gyders, but syre Persydes had a falle.

Thenne sire Tristram dressid hym to be reuengyd vpon sir palomydes, and that sawe syre Palomydes that was redy, and soo was not sire Tristram and took hym at auauntage, and smote hym ouer his hors tayle whanne he had no spere in his reyste. Thenne starte vp syre Tristram and took his hors lyztely, and was wrothe oute of mesure, and sore ashamed of that falle. Thenne sire Tristram sente vnto syr Palomydes by Gouernaile and prayd hym to juste with hym at his request. Nay said sire Palomydes as att this tyme I wille not

juste with that knyght, for I knowe hym better than he weneth. And yf he be wrothe, he may ryghte it to morne att the castel of maydens, where he maye see me and many other knyghtes. With that came syr Dynadan, and whanne he sawe sire Tristrā wrothe, he lyst not to jape, lo sayd sir Dynadan, here may a mā preue. Be a man neuer soo good yet maye he haue a falle, & he was neuer soo wyse but he myght be ouersene, and he rydeth wel that neuer fylle. Soo syre Tristram was passynge wrothe and sayd to syre Persydes and to syre Dynadan I wille reuenge me. Ryghte soo as they stood talkyng there, there came by sir Tristram a lykely knyght rydyng passynge soberly and heuyly with a blak shelde. What knyght is that said sir Tristram vnto syr Persydes. I knowe hym well said sir Persydes, for his name is sire Bryaunt of Northwalys, soo he paste on amonge other knyghtes of Northwalys. And there came in syre launcelot du lake with a sheld of the armes of Cornewaile, and he sente a squyer vnto syr Bryaunt, and requyred hym to juste with hym. Wel said syr Bryaunt, sythen I am requyred to juste, I wille doo what I may, and there syre launcelot smote doune syr Bryaunt from his hors a grete falle. And thenne syr Tristram merueiled what knyght he was that bare the sheld of Cornewaile. What so euer he be said syr Dynadan I warante you he is of Kynge Bannys blood, the whiche ben knyghtes of the moost noble prowesse in the world, for to accompte soo many for soo many. Thenne there came two knyztes of Northgales, that one hyghte Hewe de la montayne, and the other syr Madok de la montayne, & they chalengyd sire launcelot foote hote. Syr Launcelot not refusyng hem but made hym redy, with one spere he smote hem doune bothe ouer their hors croupes, and soo sir launcelot rode his way. By the good lord said sire Tristram he is a good knyght that bereth the shelde of Cornewaile, and me semeth he rydeth in the best maner that euer I sawe knyghte ryde. Thenne the kynge of Northgalys rode vnto syre Palomydes, and praid hym hertely for his sake to juste with that knyght that hath done vs of Northgalys despyte. Syr said sir Palomydes I am ful lothe to haue adoo with that knyght, and cause why is, for as to morne the grete turnement shalle be. And therfor I wille kepe my self fresshe by my wille. Nay said the kyng of Northgalys I pray you requyre hym of justes, syre sayd

syr palomydes I wille juste at your request, and requyre that knyght to juste with me, and often I haue sene a man haue a falle at his owne request.

Capitulum xix. (xxix.)

THENNE sir palomydes sente vnto sir launcelot a squyer and requyred hym of justes. Fair felawe seid sir launcelot, telle me thy lordes name. Syre said the squyer my lordes name is syr Palomydes the good knyght. In good houre said sir launcelot, for there is no knyght that I sawe thys seuen yeres that I had leuer adoo with all than with hym. And so eyther knyghtes made hem redy with two grete speres. Nay said syr Dynadan ye shalle see that sir Palomydes will quyte hym ryght wel. hit may be soo said sir Tristram, but I vndertake that knyght with the sheld of Cornewayle shal gyue hym a falle. I bileue hit not said sir Dynadan. Ryght so they spored their horses, and feutryd their speres, and eyther hytte other, and syr palomydes brake a spere vpon sire launcelot, and he sat and meued not, but sir Launcelot smote hym so lyghtly that he made his hors to auoyde the sadel, and the stroke brake his shelde and the hauberke, and had he not fallen, he had be slayne. how now said sir Tristram, I wiste wel by the maner of their rydyng bothe that sire Palomydes shold haue a falle. Ryght so sir launcelot rode his way and rode to a well to drynke and to repose hym, and they of Northgalys aspyed hym whyther he rode, and thenne there folowed hym twelue knyghtes for to haue meschyeued hym, for this cause that vpon the morne at the turnement of the castel of maydens that he shold not wynne the vyctory. Soo they came vpon sir launcelot sodenly and vnnethe he myght putte vpon hym his helme, and take his hors but they were in handes with hym, & thenne sir launcelot gat his spere and rode thorou them, and there he slewe a knyght and brake his spere in his body. Thenne he drewe his swerd and smote vpon the ryght hand and vpon the lyfte hand soo that within a fewe strokes he had slayne other thre knyghtes, and the remenaunt that abode he wounded hem sore alle that dyd abyde. Thus syr launcelot escaped from his enemyes of

Northwalys, and thenne sir launcelot rode his way tyl a frende & lodged hym tyl on the morne, for he wold not the fyrste daye haue adoo in the turnement by cause of his grete labour. And on the fyrst day he was with kyng Arthur there as he was set on hyhe vpon a schaffold to discerne who was best worthy of his dedes. So sir launcelot was with kyng Arthur, and justed not the fyrst daye.

Capitulum xxx.

Now torne we vnto sir Tristram de lyones that commaunded Gouernaile his seruaunt to ordeyne hym a blak sheld with none other remembraunce therin. And soo syre Persydes and syr Tristram departed from their hooste syr Pellounes, and they rode erly toward the turnement, and thenne they drewe hem to kynge Carados syde of Scotland, and anone knyztes beganne the felde what of kynge Northgalys party, and what of kynge Carados party, & there began grete party. Thenne there was hurlyng and rasshynge. Ryght soo came in syr Persydes and sire Tristram, and soo they dyd fare that they put the kyng of Northgalys abak. Thenne came in syre Bleoberys de ganys and syre Gaherys with them of Northgalys, and thenne was sir Persydes smyten doune, and alle moost slayne. For moo than xl horsmen wente ouer hym. For syr Bleoberys dyd grete dedes of armes and syre Gaherys fayled hym not. Whanne sire Tristram byheld them, and sawe hem doo suche dedes of armes, he merueylled what they were. Also sir Tristram thought shame that sir Persydes was soo done to, and thenne he gat a grete spere in his hand, and thenne he rode to sire Gaherys and smote hym doune from his hors. And thenne was sire Bleoberys wroth and gate a spere and rode ageynst sir Tristram in grete yre, & there syre Tristram mette with hym, and smote sir Bleoberys from his hors. Soo thenne the kynge with the honderd knyghtes was wrothe, and he horsed sire Bleoberys and sir gaherys ageyne, and there beganne a grete medle, and euer sir tristram held them passynge shorte, and euer sir Bleoberys was passynge besy vpon syre Trystram, and there came sir Dynadan ageynst syre Tristram, and sire Tristram gaf hym suche a buffet that

he swouned in his sadel. Thenne anone sir Dynadan cam to sire Tristram, and said syr I knowe the better than thow wenest. But here I promyse the my trouthe I wille neuer come ayenst the more, for I promyse the that swerd of thyn shal neuer come on myn helme. With that came sir Bleoberys, and syr Tristram gaf hym suche a buffet that doune he leyd his hede, and thenne he caught hym so sore by the helme, that he pulled hym vnder his hors feet. And thenne kyng Arthur blewe to lodgynge. Thenne syre Tristram departed to his pauelione, and sire Dynadan rode with hym, and sire Persydes & kyng Arthur thenne and the kynges vpon bothe partyes merueylled what knyght that was with the blak shelde. Many said their aduyse, and some knewe hym for syre Tristram, and helde their pees and wold nought say. Soo that fyrste day kyng Arthur and alle the kynges and lordes that were juges gaf sir Tristram the pryce, hou be hit they knewe hym not but named hym the knyght with the black sheld.

Capitulum xxxi.

Thenne vpon the morne sire Palomydes retorned from the kynge of Northgalys, and rode to kyng Arthurs syde where was kynge Carados and the kynge of Irland, & syr launcelots kynne and sir Gawayns kynne. Soo sire palomydes sente the damoysel vnto sire Tristram that he sente to seke hym whanne he was oute of his mynde in the forest, and thys damoysel asked sire Tristram, what he was, and what was his name. As for that said sir Tristram telle sir Palomydes ye shalle not wete as at this tyme vnto the tyme I haue broken two speres vpon hym. But lete hym wete thus moche said sir Tristram, that I am the same knyghte that he smote doune in ouer euenyng at the turnement & telle hym playnly, on what party that syre Palomydes be, I wille be of the contrary parte. Syre said the damoysel ye shalle vnderstande that sir Palomydes wille be on kyng Arthurs syde, where the moost noble knyghtes of the world ben. In the name of God said sir Tristram, thenne wille I be with the kynge of Northgalys by cause syr Palomydes wille be on kynge Arthurs

syde, and els I wold not but for his sake. Soo whanne kynge Arthur was come they blewe vnto the felde, and thenne there began a grete party, and soo kynge Carados justed with the kynge of the honderd knyghtes, and there kynge Carados hadde a falle, thenne was there hurlynge and rasshynge, and ryght so cam in knyghtes of kynge Arthurs, and they bare on bak the kynge of Northgalys knyghtes. Themne sir Tristram came in and beganne so roughly and soo bygly that there was none myght withstande hym, and thus sire Tristram dured longe. And at the last syr Trystram felle amonge the felauship of kynge Ban, and there felle vpon hym syr Bors de ganys, and syr Ector de marys, and sire Blamor de ganys, & many other knyghtes. And thenne sir Tristram smote on the ryght hand and on the lyfte hand that alle lordes and ladyes spak of his noble dedes. But at the last syre Tristram shold haue had the werse, had not the kynge with the honderd knyghtes ben. And thenne he came with his felauship and rescowed sir Tristram, and brought hym awey from tho knyghtes that bare the sheldes of Cornewaile, and thenne sir Tristram sawe another felauship by them self, and there were a xl Knyghtes to gyder, and sir Kay the Seneschal was there gouernour. Thenne sire Tristram rode in amongest them, and there he smote doune syr Kay from his hors, and there he fared among tho Knyghtes lyke a grey hound among conyes. Thenne syre launcelot fond a Knyght that was sore wounded vpon the hede. Sir said sir launcelot who wounded you so sore. Sire he said a Knyght that bereth a black shelde, and I maye curse the tyme that euer I mette with hym for he is a deuyl and no man. Soo sire launcelot departed fro hym, & thought to mete with sir Tristram, and soo he rode with his swerd drawen in his hand to seke sir Tristram, and thenne he aspyed hym how he hurled here and there, and at euery stroke syr Tristram wel nygh smote doune a knyght. O mercy Jhesu said the kynge syth the tyme I bare armes sawe I neuer no knyght do so merueillous dedes of armes. And yf I shold sette vpon this knyght said sir Launcelot to hym self I dyd shame to my self, & there with al sir launcelot put vp his swerd. And thēne the Kyng with the C Knyztes, and an honderd more of Northwalys set vpon the twenty of sir launcelots kyn, and they xx Knyztes held them euer to gyder, as wylde swyne and none wold faile

other, & so whan sir Tristram beheld the noblesse of these xx knyghtes, he merueiled of their good dedes, for he sawe by their fare and by their reule that they had leuer deye than auoyde the felde.

Now Jhesu saide syre Tristram wel maye he be valyaunte and ful of prowesse that hath suche a sorte of noble Knyghtes vnto his kynne, and ful lyke is he to be a noble man that is their leder and gouernour, he mente hit by sir Launcelot du Lake. Soo whanne syre Tristram had beholden them long, he thouzt shame to see .ii.C knyztes batteryng vpon twenty knyghtes. Thenne sire Tristram rode vnto the kynge with the honderd knyghtes, and said syre leue youre fyghtynge with tho twenty knyghtes, for ye wynne no worship of them, ye be soo many, and they soo fewe. And wete ye well they wille not oute of the felde I see by their chere and countenaunce, and worship gete ye none and ye slee them, therfore leue your fyghtynge with them, for I to encreace my worship, I wyll ryde to the twenty knyghtes and helpe them with all my myghte and power. Nay said the kynge with the honderd knyghtes, ye shall not do so. Now I see youre courage and curtosy, I wille withdrawe my knyztes for your pleasyr, for euermore a good knyght wylle fauoure another, and lyke wille drawe to lyke.

Capitulum xxxii.

Thenne the kyng with the honderd knyghtes withdrewe his knyghtes. And al this whyle and long tofore syr launcelot had watched vpon syr Tristram with a very purpos to haue felaushipped with hym. And thenne sodenly syr Tristram, syr Dynadan, and Gouernaile his man rode their waye in to the forest that no man perceyued where they wente. Soo thenne kynge Arthur blewe vnto lodgynge, and gaf the kynge of Northgalys the pryce by cause syr Tristram was vpon his syde. Thenne syr launcelot rod here and there so wood as lyon that fauted his fylle by cause he had loste syre Tristram, and soo he retorned vnto kynge Arthur, and thenne in alle the felde was a noyse that with the wynde hit myght be herd two

myle thens, how the lordes and ladyes cryed the knyght with the blak shelde hath wonne the felde.

Allas said kynge Arthur where is that knyght become, hit is shame to alle tho in the felde so to lete hym escape awey from you, but with gentylnes and curtosy ye myght haue brought hym vnto me to the castel of maydens. Thenne the noble kynge Arthur wente vnto his knyghtes and comforted them in the best wyse that he coude, and sayd, my fayre felawes be not dysmayed, how be hit ye haue loste the felde this daye and many were hurte and sore wounded, and many were hole. My felawes said kynge Arthur loke that ye be of good chere, for to morne I wille be in the feld with you and reuenge you of youre enemyes.

Soo that nyght Kynge Arthur and his knyghtes reposed them self. The damoysel that came from la Beale Isoud vnto syr Tristram alle the whyle the turnement was adoynge she was with Quene Gueneuer, and euer the Quene asked her for what cause she came in to that Countrey. Madame she ansuerd I come for none other cause but from my lady la Beale Isoud to wete of your welfare. For in no wyse she wold not telle the Quene that she came for syr Tristrams sake. Soo this lady dame Brangwayne took her leue of Quene Gueneuer, and she rode after syr Tristram. And as she rode thurgh the forest she herd a grete crye, thenne she commaunded her squyer to goo in to that forest to wete what was that noyse, and soo he came to a welle and there he fond a Knyght bounden tyl a tree cryeng as he had ben wode and his hors and his harneis standynge by hym. And whan he aspyed the squyer, ther with he abraide, and brake hym self loos and took his swerd in his hand, and ranne to haue slayne that squyer. Thenne he took his hors and fledde all that euer he myght vnto dame Brangwayne, and told her of his aduenture. Thenne she rode vnto syr Tristrams pauelione, and told sire Tristram what aduenture she had fonde in the forest. Allas said syr Tristram vpon my heede there is somme good Knyghte at meschyef. Thenne sire Tristram tooke his hors and his swerd, and rode thyder, there he herd how the Knyght complayned vnto hym self and sayd, I woful knyght syre palomydes what mysauenture befalleth me, that thus am defoiled with falshede and treason thorou syre Bors and syre

Ector. Allas he sayde why lyue I soo longe. And thenne he gat his swerd in his handes, and maade many straunge sygnes and tokens, and soo thorou his ragynge he threwe his swerd in to that fontayne. Thenne sir Palomydes wayled and wrange his handes. And at the laste for pure sorow he ranne in to that Fontayne ouer his bely, and soughte after his swerd. Thenne sir Tristram sawe that and ranne vpon syr Palomydes, and helde hym in his armes fast. What arte thou said Palomydes that holdeth me soo. I am a man of this forest that wold the none harme. Allas said sire Palomydes I maye neuer wynne worship where syr Trystram is. For euer where he is, and I be there thenne gete I no worship. And yf he be awey, for the moost party I haue the gree, onles that sir Launcelot be there or syr Lamorak. Thenne sire Palomydes said ones in Irland syr Tristram putte me to the werse, and another tyme in Cornewaile and in other places in this land. What wold ye do said syre Tristram & ye had sir Tristram. I wold fyghte with hym said sir Palomydes and ease my hert vpon hym, and yet to saye the sothe syre Tristram is the gentelyst knyght in this world lyuynge. What wil ye doo sayd sir Tristram wille ye goo with me to youre lodgynge. Nay sayde he I wille goo to the kynge with the honderd knyghtes, for he rescowed me from sire Bors de ganys, and sir Ector, & els had I ben slayne traitourly. Syre Tristram said hym suche kynde wordes that syre Palomydes wente with hym to his lodgynge. Thenne Gouernaile wente to fore, and charged dame Brangwayn to goo oute of the way to her lodgynge, and byd ye syre Persydes that he make hym no quarels. And so they rode to gyders tyl they came to sire Tristrams pauelione, and there syre Palomydes had alle the chere that myght be had all that nyghte. But in no wyse sire Palomydes myzt not knowe what was syr Tristram, and soo after souper they yede to reste. And syr Tristram for grete trauaile slepte tylle it was daye. And syr Palomydes myghte not slepe for anguysshe, and in the daunynge of the daye he tooke his hors pryuely, and rode his waye vnto syr Gaherys and vnto syr Sagramour le desyrus, where they were in their pauelions, for they thre were felawes at the begynnynge of the turnement. And thenne vpon the morne the kynge blewe vnto the turnement vpon the thyrdde daye.

Capitulum xxxiii.

Soo the kynge of Northgalys and the kynge with the honderd knyghtes they two encountred with kyng Carados and with the kynge of Irland, and there the kynge with the honderd knyghtes smote doune kynge Carados, and the kynge of Northgalys smote doune the kynge of Irland. With that came in syr Palomydes, and whan he cam he made grete werke, for by his endented shelde he was well knowen. Soo came in kynge Arthur, and dyd grete dedes of armes to gyders, and putte the kynge of Northgalys and the kynge with the honderd knyghtes to the werse. With this came in syr Tristram with his black shelde. And anone he justed with syre palomydes, and there by fyne force syr Tristram smote syre palomydes ouer his hors croupe. Thenne kynge Arthur cryed Knyght with the black shelde make the redy to me, and in the same wyse sir Tristram smote kynge Arthur. And thenne by force of kyng Arthurs knyghtes the kynge and sir palomydes were horsed ageyne. Thenne kyng Arthur with a grete egre herte he gate a spere in his hand, and therupon the one syde he smote syr Tristram ouer his hors. Thenne foote hote syr Palomydes cam vpon sir Tristram as he was vpon foot to haue ouer ryden hym. Thenne sir Tristram was ware of hym, & there he stouped a syde, and with grete yre he gate hym by the arme, and pulled hym doune from his hors. Thenne syre palomydes lyghtely arose, and thenne they dasshed to gyder myghtely with their swerdes, and many kynges, Quenes and lordes stode and beheld them. And at the laste syre Tristram smote syre palomydes vpon the helme thre myzty strokes, and at euery stroke that he gaf hym he said haue this for syre Tristrams sake. With that syre Palomydes felle to the erthe grouelynge. Thenne came the kynge with the honderd knyghtes, & broughte syre Tristram an hors, and soo was he horsed ageyn. By thenne was syr Palomydes horsed, and with grete yre he justed vpon syr Tristram with his spere as hit was in the reyste and gaf hym a grete dasshe with his swerd. Thenne sir Tristram auoyded his spere, and gate hym by the neck with his bothe handes, and pulled hym clene oute of his sadel, and soo he bare hym afore hym the lengthe of

ten speres, & thenne in the presence of hem al he lete hym falle at his aduenture. Thenne sire Tristram was ware of kynge Arthur, with a naked suerd in his hand, and with his spere sir Tristram ranne vpon kynge Arthur, and thenne kynge Arthur boldely abode hym and with his swerd he smote atwo his spere, and there with alle syre Tristram stonyed, and soo kynge Arthur gaf hym thre or four grete strokes or he myzt gete out his swerd, and at the last sir Tristram drewe his swerd and assailed other passynge hard. With that the grete prees departed, thenne sir Tristram rode here and there and dyd his grete payne that xi of the good knyghtes of the blood of kynge Ban that was of sire launcelots kyn, that daye syre Tristram smote doune, that alle the estates merueilled of his grete dedes and alle cryed vpon the knyght with the black sheld.

Capitulum xxxiiii.

THENNE this crye was soo large, that sir launcelot herd it. And thenne he gate a grete spere in his hand, and came towardes the crye. Thenne sir launcelot cryed, the knyght with the blak shelde make the redy to juste with me. Whanne sire Tristram herd hym say so he gate his spere in his hand, and eyther abeyshed doun their hedes, and came to gyder as thonder, and sire Tristrams spere brake in pyeces, and syr launcelot by male fortune stroke sir Tristram on the syde a depe wound nyghe to the dethe. But yet syr Tristram auoyded not his sadel, and soo the spere brak, there with all sir tristram that was wounded gate oute his swerd, and he rasshed to sir launcelot, and gaf hym thre grete strokes vpon the helme that the fyre sprange there oute, and sir launcelot abeyshed his hede lowely toward his sadel bowe. And there with alle sir tristram departed from the felde, for he felte hym soo woūded that he wende he shold haue dyed, and sir Dynadan aspyed hym and folowed hym in to the forest. Thenne sir launcelot abode & dyd many merueyllous dedes. Soo whan sire Tristram was departed by the forests syde, he alyght & vnlaced his harneis and fresshed his woūd, thēne wende sir Dynadan that he shold haue dyed. Nay nay saide sire Tristram, Dynadan,

neuer drede the, for I am herte hole, & of this wounde I shal soone be hole by the mercy of god. By that sir Dynadan was ware where came palomydes rydynge streyghte vpon them. And thenne syre Tristram was ware that syre Palomydes came to haue destroyed hym, and so syre Dynadan gaf hym warnyng and saide sire Tristram my lord ye are soo sore wounded that ye may not haue adoo with hym, therfore I wille ryde ageynst hym and doo to hym what I maye. And yf I be slayne ye maye praye for my soule and in the meane whyle ye maye withdrawe you and goo in to the castel, or in the foreste that he shalle not mete with you. Syre Tristram smyled and said I thanke you syre Dynadan of your good wylle, but ye shalle wete that I am able to handle hym. And thenne anone hastely he armed hym and took his hors, and a grete spere in his hand and said to syre Dynadan Adieu, & rode toward syre Palamydes a softe paas.

Thenne whanne sire Palomydes sawe that, he made countenaunce to amende his hors, but he dyd hit for this cause. For he abode sire Gaherys that came after hym. And whanne he was come he rode toward syre Tristram. Thenne syre Tristram sente vnto syr palomydes and requyred hym to juste with hym. And yf he smote doune sir Palomydes, he wold doo no more to hym. And yf it so happend that sire Palomydes smote doune syr Tristram he badde hym do his vtteraunce. So they were accorded, thenne they mette to gyders, and syre Tristram smote doune sir palomydes, that he had a greuous falle, soo that he laye stylle as he hadde ben dede. And thenne sire Trystram ranne vpon syr Gaherys, and he wold not haue justed. But whether he wolde or not syre Tristram smote hym ouer his hors croupe that he laye stylle as though he had ben dede. And thenne syr Tristram rode his waye and lefte syre Persydes squyer within the pauelions, and syre Tristram and syre Dynadan rode to an old knyghtes place to lodge them. And that olde knyght had fyue sones at the turnement, for whome he prayed god hertely for their comyng home. And so as the frensshe book saith they cam home al .v. wel beten. And whan syr Tristram departed in to the forest syr laūcelot held alwey the stoure lyke hard as a man araged that took no heede to hym self, and wete ye wel there was many a noble knyghte ageynst

hym. And whanne kyng Arthur sawe sir Launcelot doo soo merueyllous dedes of armes, he thenne armed hym, & took his hors and his armour, and rode in to the felde to helpe syr launcelot, and so many knyghtes came in with kyng Arthur, and to make short tale in conclusion the kyng of Northgalys, and the kynge of the honderd knyghtes were putte to the wers, and by cause syre launcelot abode and was the last in the feld, the pryce was yeuen hym. But sir Laũcelot wold neyther for kyng, Quene ne knyghte haue the pryce, but where the crye was cryed thorugh the felde, syr launcelot syr launcelot hath wonne the felde this day, syre Launcelot lete make an other crye contrary, syr Tristram hath wonne the feld, for he beganne fyrst and last he hath endured, and soo hath he done the fyrst day, the second and the thyrd day.

Capitulum xxxv.

THENNE alle the estates and degrees hyhe and lowe sayd of syr launcelot grete worship, for the honour that he dyd vnto syr Tristram, and for that honour doyng to sir Tristram he was at that tyme more preysed and renoumed than and he had ouerthrowen v C knyghtes, and all the peple holy for this gentylnes, fyrst the estates bothe hyhe and lowe, and after the cõmynalte cryed at ones syre Launcelot hath wonne the felde who soo euer saye nay. Thenne was syre Launcelot wroth and ashamed, and soo there with alle he rode to kynge Arthur. Allas said the kynge we are alle dysmayed that syr Tristram is thus departed from vs. By god said kynge Arthur he is one of the noblest knyztes that euer I sawe hold spere or swerd in hand, and the moost curteyst knyght in his fyghtyng, for ful hard I sawe hym sayd kyng Arthur whanne he smote syr Palomydes vpon the helme thryes, that he abasshed his helme with his strokes, and also he said, here is a stroke for syr Tristram, and thus thryes he sayd. Thenne kynge Arthur, syr launcelot, and sire Dodynas le saueage took their horses to seke sir Tristram, and by the menes of syr Persydes, he had told kyng Arthur where syr Tristram was in his pauelione, but whanne they came there, syr Tristram and

sir Dynadan were gone. thenne kynge Arthur and syr launcelot were heuy, and retorned ageyne to the castel of maydens makyng grete dole for the hurte of syre Trystram, & his sodeyne departynge. Soo god me helpe said kyng Arthur I am more heuy that I can not mete with hym, thenne for al the hurtes that alle my knyghtes haue had at the turnement. Ryght soo came sir Gaherys and told kynge Arthur how syr Tristram had smyten doune syr Palomydes, and it was atte syr Palomydes owne request. Allas said Kyng Arthur that was grete dishonoure to syre Palomydes in as moche as syre Tristram was sore wounded, and now may we alle kynges and knyztes and men of worship saye that syre Tristram may be called a noble knyght and one of the best Knyghtes that euer I sawe the dayes of my lyf. For I wille that ye al kynges and Knyghtes knowe said Kynge Arthur that I neuer sawe Knyghte doo so merueyllously as he hath done these thre dayes, for he was the first that began and that lengest held on sauf this last day. And though he was hurte it was a manly aduenture of two noble Knyghtes, and whan two noble men encountre nedes must the one haue the werse lyke as god wil suffre at that tyme. As for me said sir launcelot for alle the landes that euer my fader lefte me I wold not haue hurte sir Tristram and I had knowen hym at that tyme, that I hurt hym was for I sawe not his sheld. For and I had sene his black sheld, I wold not haue medled with hym for many causes, for late he dyd as moche for me as euer dyd Knyght and that is wel knowen that he had adoo with thyrtty Knyztes, and no helpe saue syr Dynadan. And one thynge shalle I promyse said syr launcelot, syr Palomydes shalle repente it as in his vnkyndely delynge for to folowe that noble knyght that I by myshap hurted thus. Syr launcelot sayd alle the worship that myght be said by sir Tristram. Thenne kyng Arthur made a grete feest to alle that wold come.

And thus we lete passe Kynge Arthur, and a lytel we wille torne vnto sir Palomydes that after he had a falle of sire Tristram, he was nyghe hand araged oute of his wyt for despyte of sir Tristram. And soo he folowed hym by aduenture. And as he came by a ryuer in his woodenes, he wold haue made his hors to haue lepte ouer, and the hors fayled footynge, and felle in the Ryuer, wherfore syre

palomydes was adrad lest he shold haue ben drouned, and thenne he auoyded his hors, and swamme to the land, and lete his hors goo doune by aduenture.

Capitulum xxxvi.

And whanne he came to the land he took of his harneis, and satte rorynge and cryenge as a man oute of his mynde. Ryght so came a damoysel euen by syr Palomydes that was sente fro syr Gawayne and his broder vnto sir mordred that lay seke in the same place with that old knyzt where syr Tristram was. For as the Frensshe book saith syr Persydes hurte soo syr Mordred a ten dayes afore, and had not ben for the loue of sir Gawayne and his broder, syr Persydes had slayne sir Mordred, and soo this damoysel came by sir palomydes, and she and he had langage to gyder, the whiche pleasyd neyther of them, and soo the damoysel rode her wayes tyl she came to the old knyghtes place, & there she told that old knyght how she mette with the woodest knyght by aduenture that euer she mette with all. What bare he in his sheld said sir Tristram, hit was endented with whyte and black saide the damoysel. A said sir Tristram that was sir palomydes, the good knyght. For wel I knowe hym said sir Tristram for one of the best knyghtes lyuynge in this realme. Thenne that old knyght took a lytel hackney and rode for syre palomydes, and brought hym vnto his owne manoyr, and ful wel knewe sire Tristram syr Palomydes, but he said but lytel, for at that tyme syr Tristram was walkyng vpon his feet, and wel amended of his hurtes, and alweyes whan sire Palomydes sawe syr Tristram, he wold behold hym ful merueillously. And euer hym semed that he hadde sene hym. Thenne wold he saye vnto syre Dynadan and euer I may mete with syre Tristram he shal not escape myn handes. I merueile said sir Dynadan y^t^ ye booste behynde syr Tristram, for it is but late that he was in youre handes, and ye in his handes, why wold ye not holde hym whanne ye hadde hym, for I sawe my self twyes or thryes that ye gat but lytel worship of sir Tristram, thenne

was syr Palomydes ashamed. Soo leue we them a lytyl whyle in the old castel, with the old knyght sir Darras.

Now shall we speke of Kynge Arthur, that said to sir Launcelot had not ye ben, we had not lost syre Tristram, for he was here dayly vnto the tyme ye mette with hym, and in an euylle tyme sayd Arthur ye encountred with hym. My lord Arthur said Launcelot ye putte vpon me that I shold ben cause of his departycyon, god knoweth hit was ageynste my wille. But whan men ben hote in dedes of armes ofte they hurte their frendes as wel as their foes. And my lord said sir launcelot ye shal vnderstande that sir Tristram is a man that I am loth to offende for he hath done for me more than euer I dyd for hym as yet. But thenne sir launcelot made brynge forth a book and thēne sir launcelot said, here we are ten Knyghtes that wil swere vpon a book neuer to reste one nyght where we rest another this twelue moneth vntyl that we fynde syr Tristram. And as for me said syre Launcelot I promyse you vpon this book that and I may mete with hym, outher with fayrenes or foulnesse I shalle brynge hym to this courte, or els I shalle dye therfore. And the names of these ten knyghtes that hadde vndertake this quest were these folowynge. Fyrst was sir Launcelot, syr Ector de Marys, syr Bors de ganys and Bleoberis and syre Blamor de ganys, and Lucan the botteler, syr Vwayne, syr Galyhud, Lyonel and Galyodyn. Soo these x noble knyghtes departed from the courte of kynge Arthur, and soo they rode vpon their quest to gyders vntyl they came to a crosse where departed four wayes, and there departed the felaushyp in four to seke syr Tristram. And as syr launcelot rode by aduenture he mette with dame Brangwayn that was sent in to that countrey to seke sir Tristram, and she fled as faste as her palfrey myght goo. Soo sire Launcelot mette with her and asked her why she fledde. A fayre knyghte said dame Brangwayne I flee for drede of my lyf, for here foloweth me syr Breuse saunce pyte to slee me. Hold you nyghe me sayd sir launcelot. Thenne whanne sire Launcelot sawe sir Breuse saunce pyte, syr launcelot cryed vnto hym, and said, fals knyght destroyer of ladyes and damoysels, now thy last dayes be come. Whanne sire Breuse saunce pyte sawe sire launcelots sheld he knewe hit wel, for at that tyme he bare not the armes of Cornewaile, but he

bare his owne shelde. And thenne syre Breuse fled, and syr Tristram folowed after hym. But sir Breuse was soo wel horsed that whan hym lyst to flee he myght wel flee, and also abyde whan hym lyst. And thenne sire launcelot retorned vnto dame Brangwayne and she thanked hym of his grete labour.

Capitulum xxxvii.

Now wille we speke of sir Lucan the buttelere that by fortune he came rydyng to the same place there as was syr Tristram, and in he came in none other entente, but to aske herberowe, thenne the porter asked what was his name. Telle your lord that my name is syr Lucan the botteler a knyghte of the round table. Soo the porter wente vnto syre Darras lord of the place, and told hym who was there to aske herborouz. Nay nay seid syr Daname that was neuewe to syr Darras, saye hym that he shalle not be lodged here. But lete hym wete that I syr Daname wyll mete with hym anon and bydde hym make hym redy. So sire Daname came forth on horsbak, and there they mette to gyders with speres, and sir Lucan smote doune syr Daname ouer his hors croupe, and thēne he fledde in to that place, and sir Lucan rode after hym, & asked after hym many tymes. Thenne syr dynadan said to sire Tristram hit is shame to see the lordes cosyn of this place defoiled. Abyde said sir Tristram and I shalle redresse it, and in the meane whyle syr Dynadan was on horsbak and he justed with Lucan y^e^ botteler, & ther sir lucan smote dynadā thurz the thyck of the thyghe, and soo he rode his way, and sire tristram was wrothe that sir Dynadan was hurte, & folowed after and thought to auenge hym, and within a whyle he ouertook sir lucan, and badde hym torne, and soo they mette to gyders soo that sire Tristram hurt sir Lucan passynge sore, and gaf hym a falle. With that came sire Vwayne a gentyl knyzt. And whanne he sawe sire Lucan soo hurte, he called syre tristram to juste with hym. Faire knyght said sire Tristram telle me your name I requyre you. Syre knyghte wete ye wel my name is syre Vwayne le fyse de roy Vreyne. A saide sire Tristram by my wille I wold not haue adoo with you at no tyme, yē

shalle not soo said sir Vwayne but ye shalle haue adoo with me. And thenne sire Tristram sawe none other boote but rode ageynst hym and ouerthrewe syr Vwayn and hurte hym in the syde, and soo he departed vnto his lodgynge ageyne. And whanne sire Dynadan vnderstood that syr Tristram had hurte sir Lucan, he wold haue ryden after syr Lucan for to haue slayne hym, but sir Tristram wold not suffre hym.

Thenne syr Vwayne lete ordeyne an hors lytter, and brought sir Lucan to the abbey of Ganys, and the castel there by hyght the castel of Ganys, of the whiche syr Bleoberys was lord. And at that Castel sire launcelot promysed alle his felawes to mete in the quest of syr Tristram. Soo whan sir tristram was come to his lodgyng, ther came a damoisel y^t^ told sir Darras that thre of his sones were slayne at that turnement and two greuously woũded that they were neuer lyke to helpe them self. And alle this was done by a noble knyghte that bare the black shelde, and that was he that bare the pryce.

Thenne came there one and told syr Darras that the same knyght was within hym that bare the black sheld. Thenne sir Darras yede vnto sir Tristrams chamber, and there he fond his sheld and shewed it to the damoysel. A syr said the damoysel that same is he, that slewe your thre sones. Thenne withoute ony taryenge syr Darras putte syre Tristram and syre Palomydes and syr Dynadan within a strong pryson, and there sir Tristram was lyke to haue dyed of grete sekenesse, and euery day syr Palomydes wold repreue sir Tristram of old hate betwixe them. And euer sir Tristram spak fayre and said lytel. But whan sir Palomydes sawe the fallynge of sekenesse of sir Tristram thenne was he heuy for hym, and comforted hym in alle the best wyse he coude. And as the Frensshe booke saith there came fourty knyghtes to sire Darras, that were of his owne kyn, and they wold haue slayne sire Tristram and his two felawes, but sire Darras wold not suffre that but kepte them in pryson, and mete and drynke they had. So sire Tristram endured there grete payne, for sekenesse had vndertake hym, and that is the grettest payne a prysoner maye haue. For alle the whyle a prysoner may haue his helthe of body, he maye endure vnder the mercy of god and in hope of good delyueraunce. But whanne sekenes toucheth a prysoners body, thenne

may a prysoner say al welthe is hym berafte, and thenne he hath cause to wayle and to wepe. Ryzt so dyd syre Tristram whanne sekenes had vndertake hym, for thenne he tooke suche sorou that he had almost slayne hym self.

Capitulum xxxviii.

Now wille we speke and leue sir Tristram, syre Palomydes, & syr Dynadan in pryson, and speke we of other knyghtes that soughte after syre Tristram many dyuerse partyes of this land, and some yede in to Cornewaile, and by aduenture syr Gaheryse neuewe vnto kyng Arthur came vnto Kynge Mark, and there he was wel receyued, and satte at kynge Marks owne table & ete of his owne messe. Thenne kynge Mark asked sir Gaheryse what tydynges there were in the royalme of Logrys. Syre said syr Gaheryse the Kyng regneth as a noble knyght, and now but late there was a grete Justes and turnement as euer I sawe ony in the realme of Logrys, and the moost noble knyghtes were at that justes. But there was one knyght that dyd merueyllously thre dayes, and he bare a black shelde, and of alle knyghtes that euer I sawe he preued the best knyzt. thenne said Kyng mark that was syre launcelot or syre palomydes the paynym. Not soo said syr Gaherys, for bothe syre launcelot and sire Palomydes were on the contrary party ageynst the Knyght with the blak shelde, thenne was it sir Tristram said the kyng, ye said sir Gaheryse. And there with all the Kyng smote doun his hede, & in his herte he feryd sore that syre Tristram shold gete hym suche worship in the Royame of Logrys, where thorou that he hym self shold not be able to withstande hym. Thus syre Gaheryse had grete chere with kynge Marke, and with quene la Beale Isoud the whiche was gladde of syr Gaheryse wordes. For wel she wist by his dedes and maners, that it was syr Tristram. And thenne the kynge made a feest Royal, and to that feest came sir Vwayne le fyse de roy Vreyne, and somme callid hym Vwayne le blaunche maynys. And this syr Vwayn chalengyd alle the knyghtes of Cornewaile. Thenne was the kyng woode wroth that he had no knyghtes to ansuer hym. Thenne sire Andred neuewe

vnto kynge Mark lépte vp and said I wille encountre with syr Vwayne. Thenne he yede and armed hym and horsed hym in the best maner. And there syre Vwayne mette with syre Andred and smote hym doune that he swouned on the erthe. Thenne was kynge Marke sory and wrothe oute of mesure that he had no knyghte to reuenge his neuewe sir Andred. Soo the kynge called vnto hym syr Dynas the seneschal, and praid hym for his sake to take vpon hym to juste with syr Vwayne. Syr said syr Dynas I am ful lothe to haue adoo with ony knyght of the round table, yet said the kyng for my loue take vpon the to juste. Soo syr Dynas made hym redy, and anone they encountred to gyders with grete speres, but sire Dynas was ouerthrowen hors and man a grete falle, who was wrothe but kynge Marke. Allas he said haue I no knyght that wille encountre with yonder knyghte. Syr said sir Gaheryse for your sake I wille Juste. So sir Gaherys made hym redy, and whanne he was armed he rode in to the felde. And whanne sir Vwayne sawe syr Gaheryses sheld he rode to hym and said, sir ye doo not youre parte. For sire the fyrst tyme ye were made Knyght of the round table ye sware that ye shold not haue ado with your felauship wetyngly. And par dy sir Gaheryse ye knewe me wel ynouz by my shelde & so do I knowe you by your sheld, and thouz ye wold breke your othe, I wold not breke myn, for there is not one here nor ye that shall thynke I am aferd of yow, but I durst ryght wel haue adoo with you, and yet we be sister sones. Thenne was sir Gaheryse ashamed, and soo there with alle euery knyght wente their way, and sir Vwayne rode in to the countrey. Thenne kyng mark armed hym and tooke his hors and his spere with a squyer with hym. And thenne he rode afore sir Vwayne, and sodenly at a gap he ranne vpon hym as he that was not ware of hym, and there he smote hym al most thurgh the body, and there lefte hym. So within a whyle there cam sir Kay, and fonde sir Vwayne, and asked hym how he was hurte, I wote not said sir Vwayne why nor wherfore, but by treason I am sure I gat this hurte, for here came a knyghte sodenly vpon me or that I was ware, and sodenly hurte me. Thenne there was come syre Andred to seke kynge Marke. Thou traytour knyght said sir kay, and I wiste it were thou that thus traitourly hast hurte this noble knyghte, thow

sholdest neuer passe my handes. Syre saide sir Andred I dyd neuer hurte hym, and that I wylle reporte me to hym self. Fy on you fals knyghtes said syr kay, for ye of Cornewaile ar nought worthe. Soo syr kay made cary syr Vwayne to the abbay of the black Crosse, and there he was helyd. And thenne syr Gaherys took his leue of kynge Mark. But or he departed he sayd, syre kynge ye dyd a foule shame vnto you & your Courte whan ye bannysshed sir Tristram out of this coũtrey, for ye neded not to haue doubted no knyght and he had ben here, and soo he departed.

Capitulum xxxix.

THENNE there came syre kay the Seneschel vnto kynge Marke, and there he hadde good chere shewyng outeward. Now fayre lordes said he wille ye preue ony aduenture in the forest of Morris in the whiche I knowe wel is as hard an aduenture as I knowe ony. Syr said sir kay, I wille preue hit. And sir Gaheryse said he wold be auysed. For kynge Mark was euer ful of treason, and there with al syr Gaheryse departed and rode his waye. And by the same waye that syre Kay shold ryde, he leyd hym doune to reste chargynge his squyer to wayte vpon sir kay, and warne me whanne he cometh. Soo within a whyle sir kay came rydynge that way, and thenne sir Gaheryse tooke his hors and met hym and sayd sire kay ye are not wyse to ryde at the request of kynge Mark for he deleth alle with treason. Thenne said sire kay I requyre you lete vs preue this aduenture. I shal not fayle you said sir Gaherys, and soo they rode that tyme tyl a lake, that was that tyme called the peryllous lake. And there they abode vnder the shawe of the wood. The meane whyle kyng Marke within the castel of Tyntagyl auoyded alle his barõs & alle other sauf suche as were pryuy with hym, were auoyded oute of his chamber. And thenne he lete calle his neuewe sir Andred, and badde arme hym and horse hym lyghtely, & by that tyme it was mydnyght. And soo kynge Marke was armed in blak hors and alle, and soo att a pryuy posterne they two yssued oute with their varlets with them, and rode tylle they came to that lake. Thenne sir Kay

aspyed them fyrst and gat his spere, and profered to juste. And kynge Mark rode ageynst hym, and smote eche other ful hard, for the mone shone as the bryght day. And there at that justes sir Kayes hors fylle doune, for his hors was not so bygge as the kynges hors and sir kayes hors brysed hym ful sore. Thenne sire Gaherys was wrothe that sir kay had a falle. Thenne he cryed knyght sytte thou fast in thy sadel, for I wille reuenge my felawe. Thenne kynge Marke was aferd of syr Gaherys, and so with euyl wylle kynge Marke rode ageynst hym, and sir Gaherys gaf hym suche a stroke that he felle doun. So thenne forth with all syr Gaheryse ranne vnto syr Andred and smote hym from his hors quyte that his helme smote in the erthe, and nyhe had broken his neck. And there with al syr Gaherys alyghte and gate vp sir Kay. And thenne they yode bothe on foote to them, and badde them yelde them, and telle theire names other they shold dye. Thenne with grete payne sire Andred spak fyrst & said hit is kynge Marke of Cornewaile, therfore be ye ware what ye do, and I am sir Andred his cosyn. Fy on you bothe said sir Gaheryse for a fals traitour, and fals treason hast thou wrouzt, and he both vnder the fayned chere that ye made vs, it were pyte said sir Gaherys that thou sholdest lyue ony lenger. Saue my lyf said kynge Marke and I wil make amendys & consyder that I am a kynge anoynted, it were the more shame said sir Gaherys to saue thy lyf, thou arte a kynge enoynted with creme, and therfore thou sholdest holde with alle men of worship. And therfor thou arte worthy to dye.

With that he lasshed at kyng Mark without sayeng ony more & couerd hym with his sheld and defended hym as he myghte, and thenne sir kay lasshed at sir Andred, and there with all kynge Marke yelded hym vnto syr Gaherys. And thenne he kneled adoune, and made his othe vpon the crosse of the suerd that neuer whyle he lyued he wold be ageynst arraunt knyghtes. And also he sware to be good Frende vnto sir Tristram, yf euer he came in to Cornewaile. By thenne sir Andred was on the erthe, and sir Kay wold haue slayne hym, lete be said sir Gaherys, slee hym not I pray you. It were pyte said syre kay that he shold lyue ony lenger, for this is nygh cosyn vnto syr Tristram, and euer he hath ben a traytour vnto hym,

& by hym he was exyled oute of Cornewaile, and therfor I will slee hym sayd sir Kay, ye shalle not said sir Gaherys sythen I haue gyuen the kynge his lyf. I pray you yeue hym his lyf. And there with alle sir Kay lete hym goo. And soo sir Kay and syre Gaherys rode their way vnto Dynas the Seneschal for by cause they herd say that he loued wel sir Tristram. Soo they reposed them there, and soone after they rode vnto the royamme of Logrys. And soo within a lytel whyle they mette with sire Launcelot that alweyes had dame Bragwayn with hym, to that entente, he wende to haue mette the sooner with sir Tristram, and syr launcelot asked what tydynges in Cornewaile, and whether they herd of sir Tristram or not. Syr Kay and sir Gaherys ansuerd and said that they herd not of hym. Thenne they told sir launcelot word by word of theire aduenture. Thenne syr launcelot smyled and said, hard hit is to take oute of the flesshe that is bred in the bone, and soo maade hem mery to gyders.

Capitulum xl.

Now leue we of this tale, and speke we of syr dynas that had within the castel a peramour, and she loued another knyghte better than hym. And so whanne syr Dynas wente oute on huntynge, she slypped doune by a tuell. And took with her two brachets, and soo she yede to the knyght that she loued, and he her ageyne. And whanne sir Dynas come home, and myst his peramour and his brachets thenne was he the more wrother for his Brachets than for the lady. Soo thenne he rode after the knyght that had his peramour and badde hym torne and juste. So syr Dynas smote hym doune that with the falle he brake his legge and his arme. And thenne his lady and peramour cryed sire Dynas mercy, and said she wold loue hym better than euer she dyd. Nay said sir Dynas I shalle neuer truste them that ones bytrayed me, and therfor as ye haue begonne so ende, for I wyll neuer medle with you. And so sir Dynas departed and tooke his brachets with hym, and soo rode to his castel.

Now wil we torne vnto sir launcelot that was ryght heuy that he coude neuer here no tydynges of sir Tristram, for al this whyle he

was in pryson with sir Darras, Palomydes, & Dynadan. Thenne dame Brangwayne took her leue to goo in to Cornewaile and syr launcelot, syr kay, & syr Gaherys rode to seke sir Tristram in the countrey of Surleuse. Now speketh this tale of sir tristram and of his two felawes, for euery daye syre Palomydes brauled and sayd langage ageynst syr Tristram. I merueyle said sir Dynadan of the syr Palomydes, and thou haddest syre Tristram here, thou woldest do hym no harme. For and a wolf and a shepe were to gyders in a pryson, the wolf wold suffre the sheep to be in pees, and wete thou wel said sire Dynadan this same is sire Tristram at a word, and now maist thou doo thy best with hym, & lete see now yf ye can skyfte it with your handes. thenne was sire Palomydes abasshed and said lytyl. syr Palomydes thenne said sir Tristram, I haue herd moche of your maugre ageynst me, but I wille not medle with you as at this tyme by my wille, by cause I drede the lord of this place that hath vs in gouernaunce, for and I dredde hym not more than I doo the, soone hit shold be skyfte, soo they peaced them self. Ryght soo came in a damoysel and said knyghtes be of good chere for ye are sure of your lyues, and that I herd say my lord syre Darras. Thenne were they gladde alle thre. For dayly they wende they shold haue dyed. Thenne soone after this syr Tristram fylle seke that he wende to haue dyed, thenne syr Dynadan wepte, and soo dyd sire Palomydes vnder them bothe makyng grete sorou. Soo a damoysel came in to them and fonde them mornynge. Thenne she wente vnto sire Darras, and told hym how that myghty knyghte that bare the black shelde was lykely to dye. That shalle not be sayd sir Darras, for god defende whanne Knyghtes come to me for socour that I shold suffre hem to dye within my pryson. Therfor said sir Darras to the damoysel, fetche that knyzt and his felawes afore me. And thenne anone sir Darras sawe sir Tristram brought afore hym, he said sire Knyghte me repenteth of thy sekenesse, for thou arte called a ful noble knyght, and soo hit semeth by the. And wete ye wel it shall neuer be said that syr Darras shalle destroye suche a noble knyght as thou arte in pryson, how be hit, that thou hast slayn .iii. of my sones, where by I was gretely agreued. But now shalt thou goo and thy felawes, and youre harneis & horses haue ben fayre and clene kepte, and ye shall

goo where hit lyketh you vpon this couenaunt, that thou Knyght wilt promyse me to be good frende to my sones two that ben now on lyue, and also that thou telle me thy name. Syr said he as for me my name is sir Tristram de Lyones, and in Cornewaile was I born and neuewe I am vnto Kynge Marke. And as for the deth of your sones I myght not doo with alle. For and they had ben the next kyn y^{t} I haue, I myzt haue done none other wyse. And yf I had slayne hem by treason or trechery I hadde ben worthy to haue dyed. Alle this I consyder said syr Darras, that alle that ye dyd was by force of knyghthode, and that was the cause I wold not putte you to deth. But sythe ye be syr Tristram the good knyght I pray you hertely to be my good frend and to my sones. Syr said sire Tristram I promyse yow by the feithe of my body euer whyle I lyue I wille do yow seruyse, for ye haue done to vs but as a natural Knyghte ought to doo. Thenne sir Tristram reposed hym there tyl that he was amended of his sekenesse. And whanne he was bygge and stronge, they took their leue, and euery knyght took their horses and soo departed and rode to gyders tyl they came to a crosse way. Now felawes said syr Tristram here wylle we departe in sondry wayes, and by cause sire Dynadan hadde the fyrst aduenture of hym I wille begynne.

Capitulum xli.

Soo as sir Dynadan rode by a welle, he fond a lady makyng grete dole. What eyleth you said sir Dynadan. Syre knyght said the lady I am the wofullest lady of the world, for within these fyue dayes, here came a knyght called sir Breuse saunce pyte, and he slewe myn owne broder. And euer syns he hath kepte me at his owne will, and of al men in the world I hate hym moost. And therfor I requyre you of knyghthode to auenge me, for he wille not tary but be here anone. Lete hym come said sire Dynadan. And by cause of honour of alle wymmen I wylle doo my parte. With this cam syr Breuse. And whan he sawe a Knyght with his lady, he was wood wrothe. And thenne he said sir Knyght kepe the from me, soo they hurled to gyder

as thonder, and eyther smote other passynge sore. But syre Dynadan putte hym thurgh the sholder a greuous wounde, and or euer sir Dynadan myght torne hym syr Breuse was gone and fledde. Thenne the lady prayd hym to brynge her to a Castel there besyde but four myle thens, and soo sir Dynadan brought her there, & she was welcome, for the lord of that castel was her vnkel, and soo syre Dynadan rode his way vpon his aduenture.

Now torne we this tale vnto syre Tristram that by aduenture he cam to a castel to aske lodgynge, wherin was quene Morgan le fay, & soo whan sire Tristram was lete in to that castel, he had good chere alle that nyght. And vpon the morne whan he wold haue departed, the Quene said, wete ye wel ye shall not departe lyghtely, for ye are here as a prysoner. Jhesu defende said syr Tristram, for I was but late a prysoner. Fayr knyght sayd the quene ye shalle abyde with me tyl that I wete what ye ar and from whens ye come. And euer the Quene wold set syr Tristram on her owne syde, and her peramour on the other syde. And euer Quene Morgan wold beholde syr Tristram, & ther at the knyght was jalous, and was in wille sodenly to haue ronne vpon sir Tristram with a swerd, but he lefte it for shame, thēne the quene said to sir Tristram telle me thy name & I shalle suffre you to departe whan ye will. vpon that couenaunt I telle you my name is syr Tristram de lyones. A sayd Morgan le fay, and I had wyst that thou sholdest not haue departed soo soone as thou shalt. But sythen I haue maade a promyse, I wille holde hyt, with that thou wilt promyse me to bere vpon the a shelde that I shall delyuer the, vnto the castel of the hard roche where kynge Arthur hath cryed a grete turnement, and there I pray you that ye wille be, and to doo for me as moche dedes of armes as ye maye doo. For att the Castel of maydens syr Tristram ye dyd merueillous dedes of armes as euer I herd knyght doo. Madame said syr Tristram lete me seè the shelde that I shalle bere. Thenne the shelde was brought forth, and the feld was guldyssh with a kynge and a quene therin paynted, and a knyght standynge aboue them vpon the kynges hede, and the other vpon the quenes. Madame said sir Tristram this is a fayre shelde and a myzty. But what sygnefyeth this kynge and this quene, and that knyght standynge vp bothe their hedes. I shalle telle you

said Morgan le fay hit sygnefyeth kynge Arthur and quene gueneuer and a knyght that holdeth them both in bondage and in seruage. Who is that knyght said syre Tristram, that shalle ye not wete as at this tyme, said the quene, but as the Frensshe book saith Quene Morgan loued sir launcelot best, and euer she desyred hym, and he wold neuer loue her, nor doo no thyng at her request, and therfore she held many Knyghtes to gyder, for to haue taken hym by strengthe. And by cause she demed that syr Launcelot loued Quene Gueneuer peramour, and she hym ageyne, therfore Quene Morgan le fay ordeyned that sheld to put sir launcelot to a rebuke to that entent that kyng Arthur myght vnderstande the loue bitwene them. Thenne sir Tristram took that sheld and promysed her to bere hit atte turnement at the castel of the hard roche. But sir Tristram knewe not that that sheld was ordeyned ageynst syr launcelot, but afterward he knewe hit.

Capitulum xlii.

Soo thenne sire Tristram took his leue of the Quene, and took the sheld with hym. Thenne came the knyzte that helde Quene Morgan le fay, his name was syre Hymeson, and he made hym redy to folowe syre Tristram, fayr frende said Morgan ryde not after that knyght, for ye shalle not wynne no worship of hym. Fy on hym coward saide sire Hemyson, for I wyst neuer good knyghte come oute of Cornewaile, but yf hit were syr Tristram de Lyones. What & that be he said she. Nay nay said he, he is with la beale Isoud and this is but a daffyssh knyght. Allas my fair frende ye shalle fynde hym the best knyght that euer ye mette with alle. For I knowe hym better than ye doo, for your sake said sir Hemyson I shalle slee hym. A fayr frende said the Quene me repenteth that ye wylle folowe that knyght, for I fere me sore of youre ageyne comynge. With this, this knyghte rode his waye woode wrothe, and he rode after syr Tristram as fast as he hadde ben chaced with knyghtes. Whanne sir Tristram herd a knyghte come after hym soo fast, he retorned aboute, and sawe a knyzt comynge ageynst hym. And whanne he came nyghe to sir Tristram, he cryed on hyghe syr knyght kepe the from me. Thenne

they rasshed to gyders as hit had ben thonder, and sir Hemyson brysed his spere vpon syr Tristram, but his harneis was soo good that he myght not hurte hym. And syre Trystram smote hym harder and bare hym thorou the body, and fylle ouer his hors croupe. Thenne sire Tristram torned to haue done more with his swerd, but he sawe soo moche blood go from hym that hym semed he was lykely to deye. And so he departed from hym, and came to a fayre manoyre to an old knyzt and there syre Tristram lodged.

Now leue to speke of sir Tristram, and speke we of the knyght that was wounded to the dethe. thenne his varlet alyght and took of his helme, and thēne he asked his lord whether there were ony lyf in hym, there is in me lyf saide the knyghte but hit is but lytyl, and therfore lepe thou vp behynde me. Whan thou hast holpen me vp, and holde me fast that I falle not, and brynge me to Quene Morgan le fay, for depe drauztes of dethe drawen to my herte that I may not lyue, for I wold fayne speke with her or I dyed. For els my soule wyll be in grete perylle and I dye, for with grete payne his varlet brought hym to the Castel, and there syr Hemyson fylle doun dede. Whanne Morgan le fay sawe hym dede, she made grete sorou oute of reason. And thenne she lete despoylle hym vnto his shyrte, and soo she lete hym putte in to a tombe. And aboute the tombe she lete wryte, Here lyeth syr Hemyson slayne by the handes of sire Tristram de lyones. Now torne we vnto syre Tristram that asked the knyght his hoost yf he sawe late ony knyghtes aduenturous. Sir he said the last nyght here lodged with me Ector de marys and a damoysel with hym, and that damoysel told me that he was one of the best knyghtes of the world, that is not soo said sir Tristram, for I knowe four better knyghtes of his owne blood, and the fyrst is syr launcelot du lake, calle hym the best knyght, and sir Bors de ganys, Syr Bleoberys, syr Blamor de ganys and syr Gaheris. nay said his hoost, sir Gawayne is a better knyght than he, that is not soo said syr Tristram, for I haue mette with hem bothe, & I felte syr Gaherys for the better knyght and sir Lamorak I calle hym as good as ony of them, excepte sir launcelot. Why name ye not sir Tristram said his hoost, for I accompte hym as good as ony of them. I knowe not sire Tristram said tristram, thus they talked and bourded as longe as

them lyste, and thenne wente to reste. And on the morne sir Tristram departed and took his leue of his hoost, and rode toward the roche deure, and none aduenture had sire Tristram but that, & soo he rested not tyl he came to the castel where he sawe fyue C tentys.

Capitulum xliii.

THENNE the kynge of Scottes and the kyng of Irland holde ageynst kynge Arthurs knyghtes, and there beganne a grete medle. So came in syr Tristram and dyd merueillous dedes of armes, for there he smote doune many knyztes. And euer he was afore kynge Arthur with that shelde. And whanne kynge Arthur sawe that shelde, he merueylled gretely in what entente hit was made, but Quene Gueneuer demed as it was, wherfor she was heuy. Thēne was ther a damoysel of Quene Morgan in a chamber by kynge Arthur. And whan she herd kynge Arthur speke of that shelde, thēne she spak openly vnto kynge Arthur, syre kynge wete ye well this sheld was ordeyned for you to warne you of your shame and dishonour, and that longeth to you and your Quene. And thenne anone that damoysel pyked her awey pryuely, that no man wyst where she was become. Thenne was kynge Arthur sadde and wrothe and asked from whens came that damoysel, there was not one that knewe her, not wyste where she was become. Thenne Quene Gueneuer called to her sir Ector de marys, and there she made her complaynte to hym, and said I wote wel this sheld was made by Morgan le fay, in despyte of me and of sir Launcelot, wherfore I drede me sore lest I shold be destroyed. And euer the kynge bihelde syre Tristram that dyd soo merueillous dedes of armes that he wōdred sore what knyght he myght be, and wel he wyst hit was not syr launcelot. And hit was told hym that syr Tristram was in petyte Bretayne with Isoud la blaunche maynys, for he demyd and he had ben in the realme of Logrys, syr launcelot or somme of his felawes that were in the quest of syr Tristram that they shold haue fond hym or that tyme. So kyng Arthur had merueylle what knyght he myghte be. And euer syr Arthurs eye was on that shelde. Alle that aspyed the Quene, and that made

her sore aferd. Thenne euer syr Tristram smote doune knyghtes wonderly to beholde what vpon the ryght hand and vpon the lyfte hand that vnnethe no knyzt myght withstande hym. And the kyng of Scottes and the kyng of Irland beganne to withdrawe hem. Whanne Arthur aspyed that, he thought that that Knyght with the straunge sheld shold not escape hym. Thenne he called vnto hym syre Vwayn la blaunche maynys, and bad hym arme hym and make hym redy. Soo anone kynge Arthur and sir Vwayne dressid them bifore sir Tristram and requyred hym to telle hem where he had that shelde. Syr he said I had it of Quene Morgan le fay sister vnto kynge Arthur.

Soo here endeth this history of this book, for it is the firste book of sire Tristram de Lyones, and the second book of sir tristram foloweth.

END OF VOL. I.

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